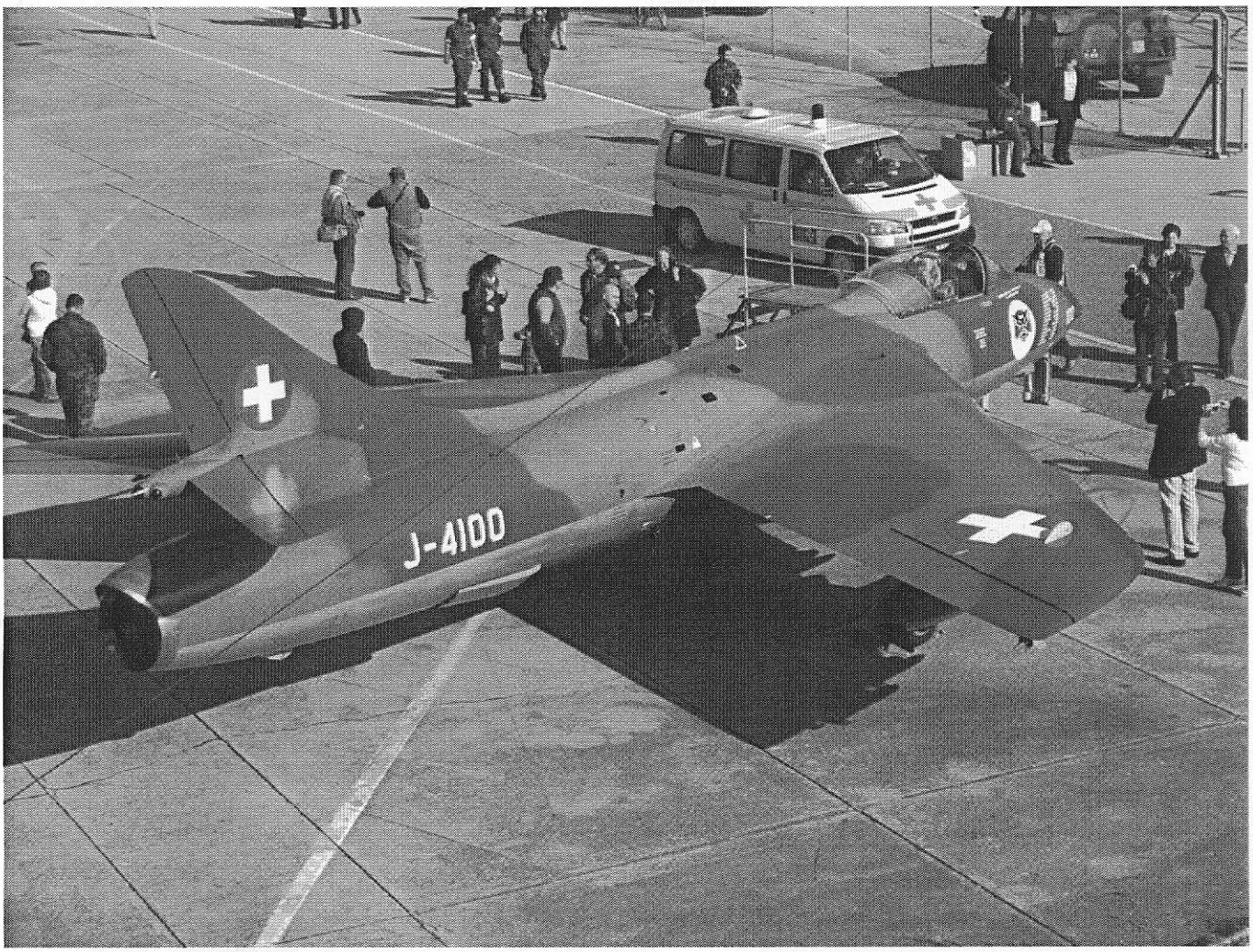
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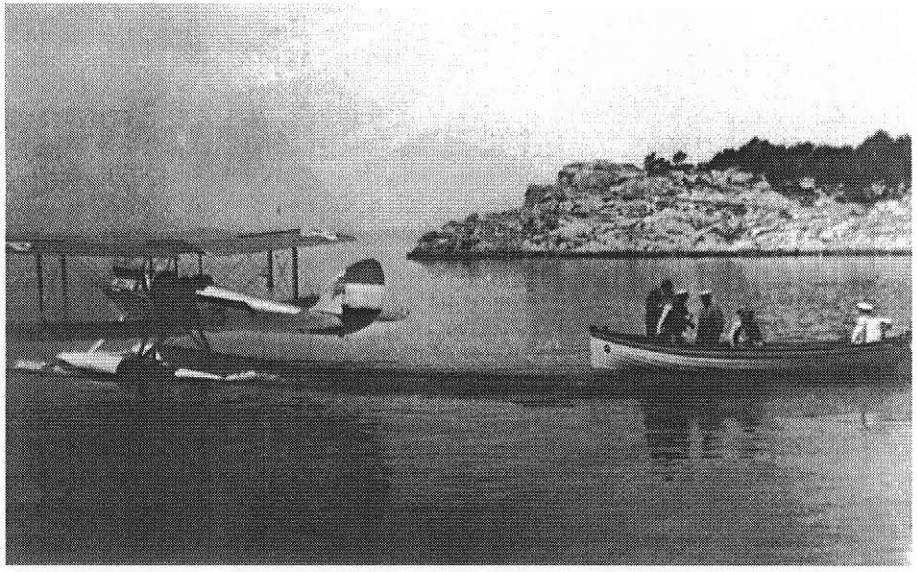
vol. 34 no.4 (136)
April 2011

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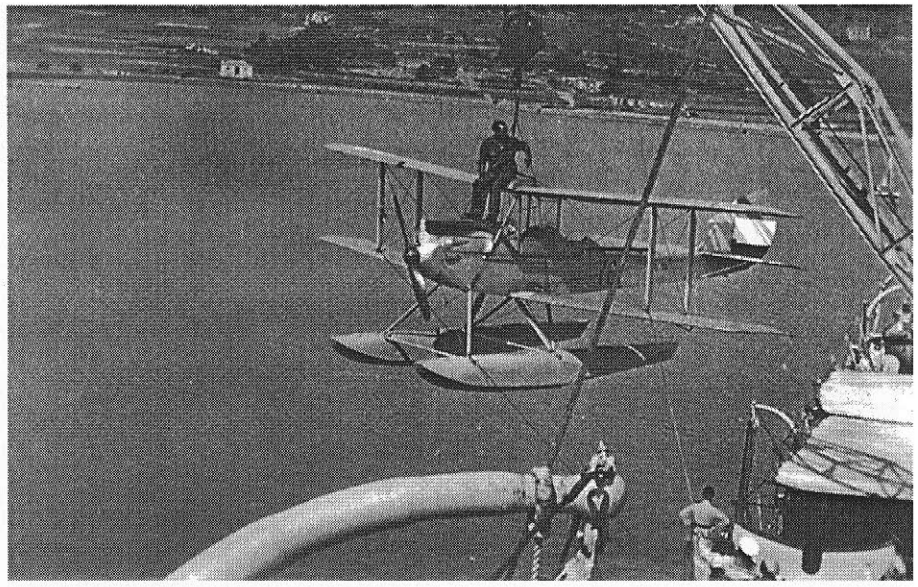


A Postman Gets a Ride in an F-16
UN DHC-2 Beavers in the Congo
Yugoslav de Havilland Moths
Triple-Tandem Monoplane
Swiss Hawker Hunters
Dutch Rumpler C.VIIIs

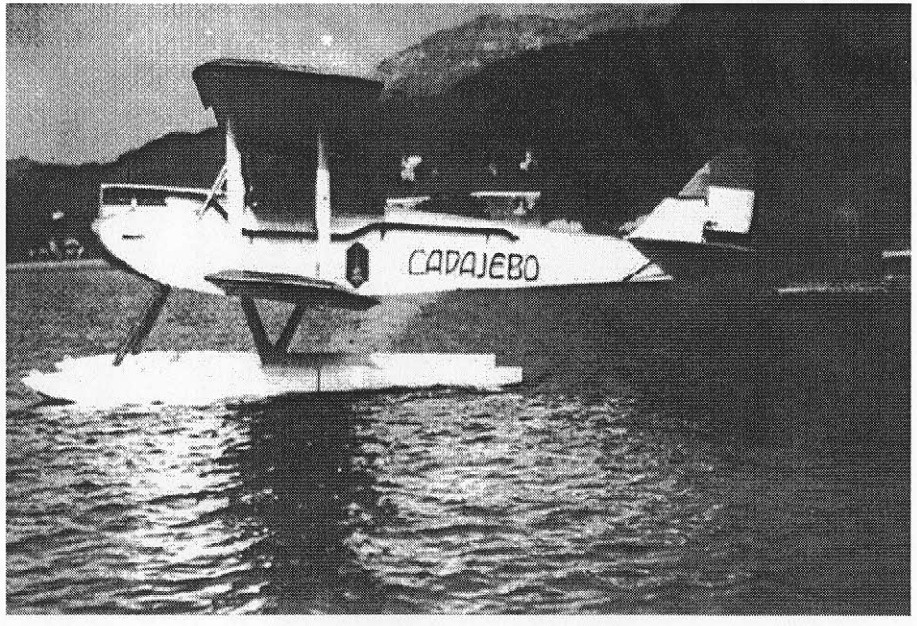
vol. 34 no. 4 (136) April 2011



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SMALL AIR FORCES OBSERVER

The Journal of the Small Air Forces Clearing House

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WEBSITE: After an absence of several years, the SAFO Website, www.safch.org has returned. It is still a work in progress, but our new webmaster, Chris Thomsen, has already built in some exciting new features. One of these features is the "Gallery" were we will post color photos from former SAFO article that were originally published in back & white. If would like to submit color photos of you're your articles, send them to the editorial office at safo@redshift.com.

COVER COMMENTS: Swiss Air Force Hawker Hunter F58 J-4100 at Sion in 2019. The Swiss bought a total of 152 F58 (J-4001 to J-4152) and eight T68 (J-4201 to J-4208). The story of the Swiss Hunters begins on page 130.

IPMS/UK T-6 SIG: If you're interested in the history and/or color schemes of the T-6/Harvard in service anywhere in the world, you should check out this Special Interest Group. Contact Sam Bartby at sambartby@sky.com or 39 Ermine Way, Sawtry, Huntingdon, Cambridgeshire, PE28 5UQ, UK.

AUSTRIA

ÖFH NACHRICHTEN (Oesterrichishe Flugzug Historiker, Pfenninggeldf 18/2/14, A-1160 Wien.

4/10 (40 pages) Color photo: Austrian FW 44J. "40 Jahre Saab 105Ö" 2 pages with color photo and color 5-view drawing of commemorative aircraft.

FRANCE

AIR MAGAZINE, Artipresse, 119 rue Anatole France, 93170 Bagnolet, France. Six issues a year. 38 euros in France, 44 euros in Europe, and 55 euros others. E-mail: airmagazine@rocketmail.com.

No. 51 Decembre 2010 / Janvier 2011 (66 pages) "Dans le ciel de Ruthénie" 20 pages including 52 photos, 3 maps, & 5 color profiles [Hungary (He 70K, CR.32, & Ju 86K; Slovak S-328 & B-534). This is the same article that appeared in SAFO #133, except with more photos, informative maps, & color profile drawings. These added illustrations make it an excellent companion to the SAFO article. "Les Douglas F4D Skyray (2)" 14 pages including 32 photos, three 4-view color drawings, & 4 color profiles. "Albatros a 100 ans" 13 pages including 24 photos and drawings of their pre-WWi aircraft. "Le production des Bloch MB 175" 10 pages including 15 photos. "Le Vickers Wellington du RAF Museum" 2 pages with 8 photos.

AVIONS: Toute l'Aeronautique et son Histoire (Lela Presse, 29 rue Paul Bert, 62230 Outreau, France. 50 euro for 6 issues). Website: www.avions-bateaux.com. E-mail: contact@avions-bayeaux.com.

#179 Janvier-Fevrier (72 pages) "Les As français de 39-45: Marcel Albert (1)" 16 pages including 26 photos and 4 color profile drawings [D.520 (2) & Spitfire V (2)]. "Dewoitine D.342: l'oiseau rare d'Air France (1)" 14 pages including 22 photos, 5 color profile drawings, one color 3-view drawing, and 3 pages of multi-view scale drawings. "Le dernier combat du 90-4" 8 pages including 12 photos of Macchi C.202 '90-4'. "Macchi M.5: l'hydravion de chasse de la Marine italienne pendeant la Première Guerre mondiale (1)" 13 pages including 30 photos and 8 color profile drawings. Praga E.180" 3 pages including 6 photos. "Le défense aérienne de Châteauroux en mai-juin 1940" 9 pages including 18 photos and 3 color profile drawings of Bloch 152 flown by Polish pilots.

GERMANY

FLIEGER REVUE EXTRA (Verlag Fliegerrevue, Herrn Detlief Billig, Oraniendamm 48, D-13469 Berlin. 4 issues per year, $66 surface. Payment by check drawn on German bank)

#31 November 2010 (114 pages) "Die Geburt der israelischen Luftwaffe – Teil 2" 40 pages including 95 photos, 2 maps, 4 color multi-view drawings [Israeli P-51D, Spitfire (2); Egyptian Spitfire], and 36 color profile drawings [Israeli Lodestar, C-46 (2), Hudson, Spitfire (8); DH.89, Beaufighter (2), Norseman, BT-13 (2), S-199, B-17, T-6, Widgeon; Egyptian Spitfire (2), MC.205 (2), G.55, T-6, Hawker Fury (G-AKRY); Jordanian DH.89; Syrian T-6; Iraqi Fury; RAF Tempest, Mosquito; UN DH.89; Yugoslav Spitfire]. "Katastrophe über Moskau" Das Ende der 'Maxim Gorki'" 28 pages including 36 photos (not counting photos of people & places) and 3 pages of color multi-view drawings (with an I-16 along side for size comparison). "Flugzeuge aus Down Under Australiens Luftfahrtindustrie" 14 pages including 53 photos (most civilian except for Lesotho GAB Airvan; RAAF, RNZAF, & Thai AF CT-4 Airtrainer), and 4 color profile drawings (civil GAB Airvan VH-BFS, PH-KMR, TI-AZY, & USAF AUX N609CP). "Dauerkrieg im Paradies - Teil 1: Die philippinische Luftwaffe" 28 pages including 67 photos, one map, 2 color 6-view drawings (Martin B-10 and Boeing P-26), and 7 color profile drawings [P-51D (2), F-86F (2), F-86D (1), and F-5A (2)].

ITALY

JP4 Menslie di Aeronautica e Spazio. Via XX Settembre, 60-50129 Firenza, Italy. Email: jp4@dueservice.com. Website: www.ediservice.it.

Dicembre 2010 (100 pages) Color photos: Colombia Boeing 767 & CIAC T-90 Calima; and Portugal P-3C Orion. "Gli ultimi Atlantic" 6 pages including 14 photos." Tiger Meet 2010" 6 pages with 13 photos. "Sanicole Airshow 2010" 2 pages including 8 photos (Turkish Star's F-5 & South Vietnam Dassault Flamant). "Incidenti Militari" ½ page including 2 photos (Zambia Harbin Y-2-II 'AF-215' & Thailand F-16A '90028'),

Gennaio 2011 (100 pages) Color photos: UAE PC-21, Morocco F-16C, & Peru Fokker 60. "Iran Air Show 2010" 2 pages including 8 photos (Shahed 285, IrAn-140, An-225, Mi-17E, & An-74T). "Airshow China 2010" 4 pages including 13 photos. "La scommessa di Volansia" 4 pages including 10 photos (Caproni Ca.1, Ca.18, & Ca.113; Gabardini idrovolante; & CH-47 Chinook). "Incidenti Militari" one page including 4 photos (Israel F-16, Algeria C-130H, & Mexico AN-32B).

POLAND

LOTNICTWO (Krzystof Zalewski, ul Grochowska 306/310, pok. 206, 03-840 Warszawa. E-mail: kz@magnum-x.pl.)

10/2010 (96 pages) "Mirage F1M – królewska straż Hiszpanii" 6 pages including 13 photos of Spanish Mirage F1Ms. "An-2 – samolot do wszystkiego?" 4 pages including 9 photos of camouflaged Polish AF An-2" "Chińskie myśliwce odrzutowe" 6 pages including 15 photos of current Chinese fighter aircraft. "Westland Whirlwind w walce" 6 pages including 10 photos and 2 color profile drawings. "Pierwsze ciężkie bombowce: Samoloty bombowe japonskiego Lotnictwa Armii" 7 pages including 14 photos [Farman (Tei 1 I Tei 2); Kawasaki Typ 87 (Do N); & Mitsubishi Typ 92 (Ki-20)].

11/2010 (96 pages) Color photos: Morocco F-16 & Iran C-130. "F-16 Jastrzab w Albacete" 4 pages including 8 photo (Polish F-16). "PZL-130 Orlik" 4 pages including 7 photos. "Lotnictwo rosyjskie w pierwszej wojnie czeczenskiej" 7 pages with 15 photos of Russian aircraft during the conflict in Chechnya. "Sily Powietrzne KRLD w wojnie koreanskiej" 8 pages including 17 photos and 5 color profile drawings [Il-10 (2), Jak-9P (1), & MiG-15bis (2)]. "Brewster F2A Buffalo" 10 pages including 18 photos, 4 color profile drawings (USN F2A-1, RN Buffalo I, & Finnish 239), and a scale 5-view drawing. "Ludwik Krempa: lotnik z Dywizjonu Ziemi Slaskiej" 5 pages on Polish pilot with 304 Squadron including 12 photos and table of all 50 missions of Krempa from 20.10.1942 to 22.06.1944 listing Wellington mark, s/n & code, airfield, and type of mission.

The DHC Beaver in UN Service in the Congo

Leif Hellström

The United Nations operation in the Congo, known as ONUC, was set up in great haste in 1960, after general unrest had broken out following independence of the former Belgian colony. From the start, an air component was included in the force, but there is no evidence that much thought went into its composition. Instead, both aircraft and crews were added in a rather haphazard way.

Before ONUC was properly organized, the US Army in Europe sent a task force to rescue US citizens out in the bush in lower Congo. The force was supported by some US Army helicopters and light aircraft, making up the 7th Army Aviation Detachment (Provisional), which used Brazzaville in the French Congo as its main base. Included in the detachment were four de Havilland-Canada DHC-2 Beavers, known as L-20As in US Army service. These were flown by American pilots for about a week before the detachment was stood down and its aircraft and helicopters handed over to ONUC on 27 July 1960.

The new UN Air Wing, as it was originally loosely called, was based at N'Dolo airport in Leopoldville, capital of the former Belgian Congo. From late July 1960, there was frantic activity to get the new unit up and running, which was accomplished in a remarkably short time, all things considered. The four Beavers together with some Otters and Super Cubs were organized into a Light Aircraft Squadron. In official documents this was sometimes referred to as 5 Squadron, but this name was never used other than on paper.

The Light Aircraft Squadron (or LAS) originally had flying personnel from Sweden, Norway, Argentina, and Yugoslavia. Of these, only the Norwegians and Yugoslavs had any experience on the Beaver and the rest had to be converted on the spot. Swedish Major Torsten Björklund became the first Commanding Officer of the LAS, while Captain Slapnicar from Yugoslavia was in charge of the Beaver section.

The first several weeks were spent in training and on shorter missions around Leopoldville. The first detachment was set up on 8 September when a Beaver, two pilots and a mechanic were sent to Gemena in north-western Congo to support an Egyptian UN battalion there. Nobody in ONUC had flown there before and nothing was known of the conditions there. Nor did the crew have a map covering the whole way: they were told that when getting to the edge of the map just keep on going due north for another 220 km. While in Gemena, the Beaver was used for liaison with the companies of the battalion, which were spread out over 300 km.

There were no flight plans or flight clearance in the Congo and flight safety was a major concern for the crews. If the engine quit, that would basically be it, as Swedish pilot Torleif Åkesson recalls:

> *We flew at 500 meters or so: there was no reason to go higher. If the engine stopped, there was nowhere to glide to anyway. In Gemena, there was jungle as far as the eye could see. The jungle grew all the way down to the banks of the river.*

Many pilots had grave reservations about flying single-engined aircraft over the jungle and already in September 1960 there were suggestions to replace the Beavers and Otters with small, twin-engine aircraft. But this never came to pass and the unit was ordered to "make do" with what they had. From late 1960, the LAS was mainly crewed by Swedish and Norwegian pilots who were often considered crazy by air crews of other nationalities. A normal crew consisted of one pilot and a flight mechanic who also handled loading and general duties.

In fact, the Beaver was not entirely suited to the Congo for other reasons. Apart from the single engine and the low cruising speed (210 km/h) there was a problem considering the vast size of the country. In addition, the load capacity of the Beaver was only 780 kg. The Beaver was considered a bit "rougher" to fly than the Otter and required about twice the runway length of the Otter.

The detachment at Gemena was discontinued in late 1960. By this time, other detachments of one or two aircraft had been set up in Kamina, Albertville, Bukavu, Elisabethville, and Luluabourg, sometimes using Beavers and sometimes Otters, depending on

availability. These bases were all in the southern half of the Congo, which was largely savannah rather than jungle, so flight safety concerns were somewhat less of a problem.

The conditions varied greatly between different bases, but were usually primitive. The air crews were often hosted by the ONUC army unit they operated with. Since the units came from many different countries, the food sometimes wreaked havoc on the stomachs of Scandinavian air crews, leading to incidents where pilots nearly passed out in flight from illness. This led to orders that all flight mechanics were to be given radio training and rudimentary flying training, so that they could fly home and land in emergencies.

The first group of air crews was replaced after six months, requiring a re-grouping of the entire unit to Leopoldville for re-training. From this point on, the unit was almost entirely crewed by Swedes and had a strength of around 30 men. Due to some administrative mix-up, the squadron was now called 4 Squadron rather than 5 Squadron, but by the spring of 1961 the unit began to be called the Light Aircraft Squadron even in official documents. The main bases remained more or less the same, and in addition Kitona, Kindu and Kabalo were used as bases for brief periods.

In 1961, the LAS frequently flew missions to out of the way airstrips in areas which were not necessarily under government control. The crews would normally do a few turns around the field before landing, and if local villagers came running down to have a look, things were likely OK. But if the area remained apparently deserted, chances were that something was wrong. Possibly some out of control soldiers were waiting to pounce as soon as the aircraft landed, which happened quite frequently. However, the aircraft and crews were always allowed to depart in the end.

Although the Beaver was considered easy to maintain, the shortage of special tools and spare parts did, in due course, become a problem requiring local improvisations. One weak point in the Beaver was the tail wheel suspension where a small spring often broke. A suitable substitute part was in due course located in the stocks of a local sewing machine workshop!

The Beavers never had any serious accidents and continued to soldier on through 1961. However, by the latter part of the year the aircraft began to approach their 1,200 hour inspections, which could not easily be performed in the Congo. The ONUC therefore decided that the Beavers were to be taken out of service as they came due for inspection. Two of the Beavers were grounded in November 1961, followed by another one in February 1962, and the last one (aircraft 401) in late March 1962. On 1 April 1962, all four were officially struck off LAS charge and placed in storage at N'Djili airport in Leopoldville. Meanwhile, the Light Aircraft Squadron continued to operate with Otters. In 1963, the Beavers were bought back by the USA and reinstated into US Army service, serving in Germany until the 1970s when they were sold off.

Painting and Markings

All four Beavers were painted overall white with a black anti-glare panel before entering ONUC service. The white paint on aircraft 401, in particular, chipped badly after a short time. Aircraft 401, 403 and, 404 usually carried wheel hub caps painted bright red with a black and white Pegasus. This was a remnant of their US Army markings. Aircraft 402 apparently lacked caps, instead showing an Olive Drab hub.

The text "ONU" was applied in six positions, using an angular typeface. The colour of the lettering was medium blue, but from photos it appears that the exact shade could differ quite a bit between aircraft, and even on the same aircraft, and evidently faded with time. On the fuselage of aircraft 401, the letters were uniquely outlined with a thin black line at some later time.

The aircraft briefly had temporary numbers, e.g. "15". Before taken into service, they were numbered 301 to 304, but for obscure reasons this was changed to 401 to 404 within weeks. The number was painted on the fin in medium blue. Since the original initial numeral "3" was replaced by a "4", the latter was sometimes a slightly different shade of blue from the last two digits in the serial.

At least three of the Beavers carried individual markings on their front doors, applied after some time in service. Unless otherwise noted, these were carried on both sides.

401: Initially marked "Josephine" (after a local nightclub beauty) in dark blue text, possibly only on the right-hand side but likely on both. Later renamed

"Aqua-white", applied in medium blue on both sides; first in a simple typeface and later in a more artistic one.

402: No markings known.

403: Marked "Primus" in medium or dark blue.

404: Initially marked "Ville" (a Swedish equivalent of Willy or Bill) in blue paint, possibly only on the right-hand side but likely on both sides. This was when based in Elisabethville, while the Otter also based there was named "Elisabeth". Later on, 404 was re-named "Wood-pecker" (after an unpopular ONUC administrator, Mr. Wood). This name was applied in artistic medium blue lettering with black outlining, incorporating a blue woodpecker with a red and yellow head.

There were some other minor variations between the aircraft, so please study photos if making a model.

Leif Hellström (SAFCH #786), e-mail: leif@leifhellstrom.com

Captions for photos on pages 143-144

1. A very early view of one of the ONUC Beavers at N'Dolo airfield before all markings had been applied. This aircraft was very quickly re-numbered first "304" and then "404". C-119G 53-7845 in the background became ONUC "104". (Torleif Åkesson)
2. Snapped during the very early days of ONUC in August 1960, a pristine Beaver 301 is seen with its Yugoslavian crew. Note the Pegasus painted on the red wheel disc. (Torsten Björklund)
3. Another early view, showing aircraft 302, which soon became 402. This Beaver lacked both spinner and wheel discs and is not known to have carried any name. (Göran Edgren)
4. A nice air-to-air view of Beaver 403, clearly showing the position of the ONU markings. Note the name "Primus" on the door and also the heavy staining on the fuselage underside. (John Eriksson)
5. Another excellent view, showing the position of the markings on the top. Beaver 402 was the only one with a square blade antenna on top of the fuselage. (Gunnar Brink)
6. Some Swedish pilots of the Light Aircraft Squadron look on as the name "Wood-pecker" is being applied to Beaver 404. Note the "chip" in the letter W. On this aircraft, the original yellow on Olive Drab data block had been saved on the front fuselage, but with "US Army" painted out in white. Inserted is a scrap-view of the woodpecker markings on the right-hand side, painted using the same template. The bird's head was red with yellow details. (Hans Backner)
7. Four scrap-views showing the text "Aqua-white" on Beaver 401, the top two views showing the original style and the lower ones the later style. Note that the text is angled in the same direction on both sides.
8. The top two views show the text "Primus" on aircraft 403, right and left sides. Bottom left is "Ville", the original marking on Beaver 404, and lower right is "Josephine", the first name on 401. Note that the door of 401 also carried the crew's names (Major Björklund, Capt Gustavsson, WO Olson), which was very unusual for an ONUC aircraft.

The DHC Beaver in UN Service in the Congo

Serials	Type	C/n	Previous ID	Served from	Served to	Remarks
301 / 401	L-20A	1391	58-2059	27 Jul 60	1 Apr 62	Named "Josephine" and later "Aqua-white". Returned US Army service Sep 63.
302 / 402	L-20A	1348	58-2019	27 Jul 60	1 Apr 62	No known names. Returned US Army service Sep 63. Later to N87782.
303 / 403	L-20A	1111	56-388	27 Jul 60	1 Apr 62	Named "Primus". Returned US Army service Sep 63. Later to N93483 and N11GA.
304 / 404	L-20A	1108	56-387	27 Jul 60	1 Apr 62	Named "Ville" and later "Wood-pecker". Returned US Army service Sep 63. Later to CF-JRO.

Royal Yugoslav Naval AF and Yugoslav Aero Club De Havilland Moths

Nenad M. Miklusev

The late 1920s, known as Golden Age of Aviation, saw a great array of successful aircraft: the de Havilland series of Moths was one of the most famous. The Royal Yugoslav Naval aviation command's search for an appropriate primary trainer and the successful promotional tour of DH 60G Moth, G-AAFF, Miss Dalmatia, in Yugoslavia during May 1929., resulted in an order for four DH 60G , Gipsy Moths, equipped with floats.

These Moths were delivered on November 2, 1929. Serialed 73/74/75 and "Sarajevo" (c/n 1181/1182/1183/1189) and equipped with Short Brother's floats, they served until WW II as training planes in Naval Aviation units. Another Moth (the 5th) for Royal Yugoslav Naval AF was bought in 1936, serialed 76 (named "Sushak") to replace one (#73) lost in crash. All the Moths were imported via the Yugoslav branch of De Havilland Aircraft Co Ltd and its representative in Yugoslavia, Mr. Thomas G. Mapplebeck.

The Royal Yugoslav Aero Club also ordered a few DH 60 Moths. The first one, DH 60G, G-AALZ, was delivered on September 19, 1929. Named "Kraljevic Tomislav" (Prince Tomislav), it belonged to the Zagreb Aero Club. Seven DH Moths (5 DH 60G Gipsy Moths, one DH 60M Metal Moth, and one DH60G III Moth Major served with Yugoslav Aero Clubs before WW II.

The Aero Club Moths were "mobilized" during 1940 and became part of RYAF training and liaison units. They were mostly detached to war-time airfields in the spring of 1941, where they were either destroyed or captured by German units after Yugoslavia surrendered on April 17, 1941. All but one of the Yugoslav Moths disappeared during WWII: the sole survivor, DH 60 Moth Major, YU-PCH, served with the newly recreated Yugoslav AF until 1949.

Nenad Mikklusev (SAFCH #1591) Serbia.

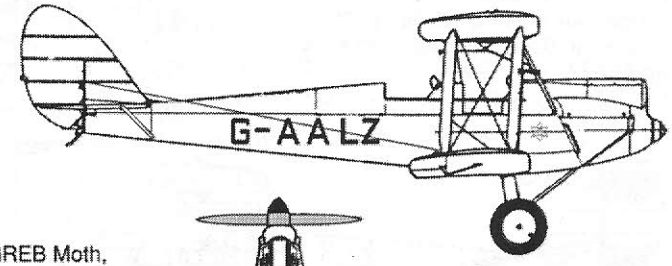
Type	c/n	Serial	Acquired	In service till:	Note
DH 60 G Moth (floats)	1181	73	1929	1933	Crashed 1933
DH 60 G Moth (floats)	1182	74	1929	1941	Damaged 1941
DH 60 G Moth (floats)	1183	75	1929	1939/1940	New floats 1937
DH 60 G Moth (floats)	1189	SARAJEVO	1929	1941	Captured 1941
DH 60 G Moth (floats)	1184?	76 / SUSHAK	1936	1941	Captured 1941
DH 60 G Moth	1177	G-AALZ	1929	1930	Crashed
DH 60 G Moth	1254	UN-PAH	1931	1933	ex G-AAZL
DH 60 G Moth	1267	YU-PAS	1930	1935	ex G-ABBI
DH 60 G Moth	1260	YU-PAV	1930	1938	ex G-ABBG
DH 60 G Moth	1338	YU-PDH	1929	1938	ex G-AAFF
DH 60 M Metal Moth	3028	YU-SAI	1929	1941	ex G-ABXM
DH 60 M Moth Major	5057	YU-PCH	1934	1949	Yugoslav AF No 11

Captions for Photos on Page 110

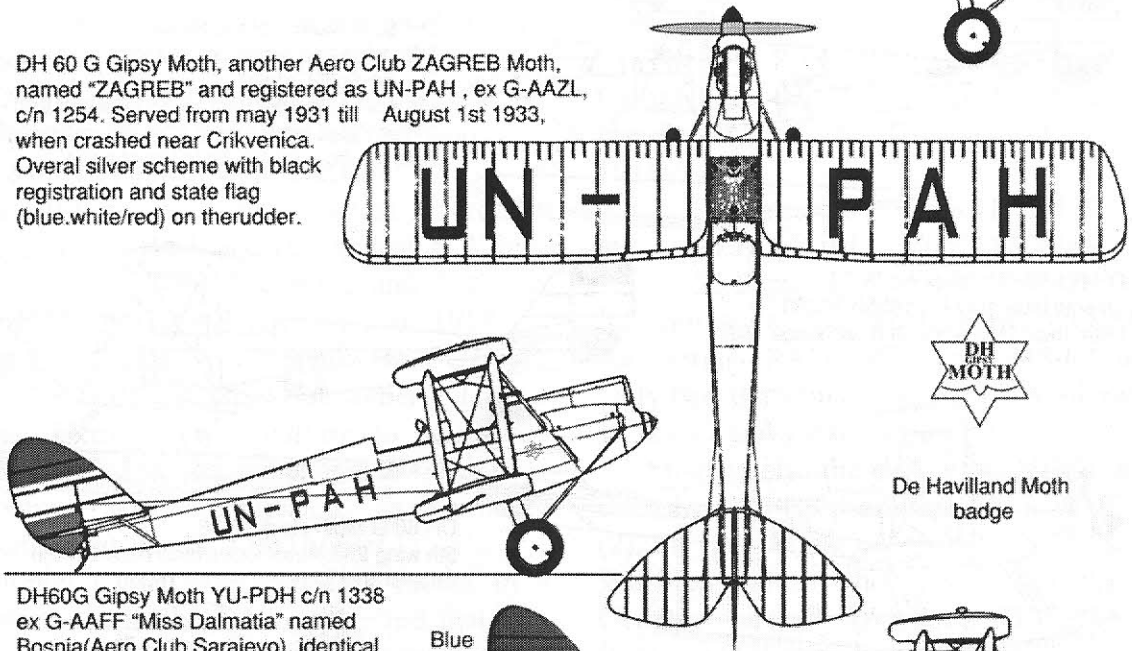
1. DH Gipsy Moth No 75 Royal Yugoslav Naval Air Force 1937.
2. DH Gipsy Moth No 76 Royal Yugoslav Naval Air Force in August 1937 while being loaded onto the ZMAJ (Dragon) naval aircraft carrier.
3. DH 60 Gipsy Moth SARAJEVO Royal Yugoslav Naval Air Force 1940.
4. DH 60G Gipsy Moth G-AALZ of the Aero Club Zagreb. It crashed on 21-9-1930.

De Havilland D.H.60 G Gipsy Moth in Kingdom of Yugoslavia

First delivered DH 60G GipsyMoth, (Oct.6th1929.)G-AALZ c/n1177, belongs to Zagreb Aero Club. Overal silver scheme, never wear Yugoslav registration due the fatal crash near Turopolje on sept.21st 1930.



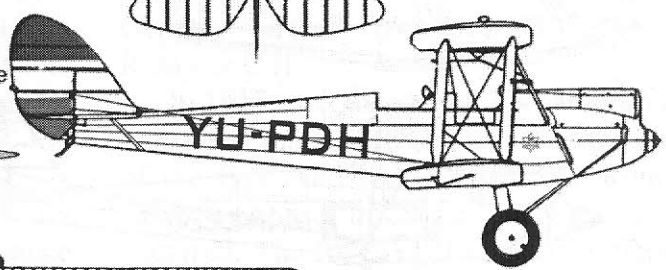
DH 60 G Gipsy Moth, another Aero Club ZAGREB Moth, named "ZAGREB" and registered as UN-PAH , ex G-AAZL, c/n 1254. Served from may 1931 till August 1st 1933, when crashed near Crikvenica. Overal silver scheme with black registration and state flag (blue.white/red) on therudder.

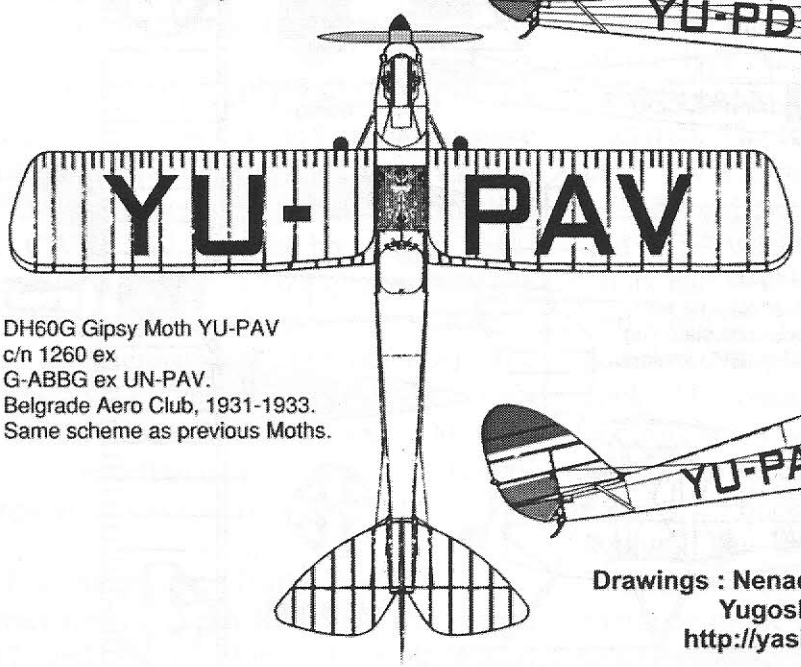


De Havilland Moth badge

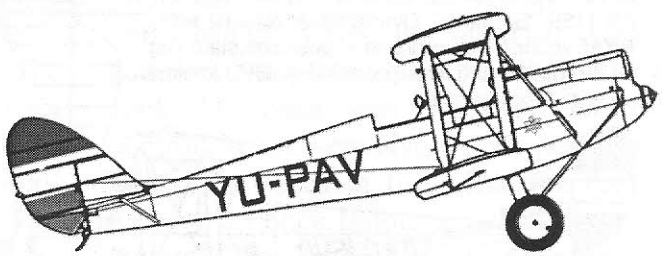
DH60G Gipsy Moth YU-PDH c/n 1338 ex G-AAFF "Miss Dalmatia" named Bosnia(Aero Club Sarajevo), identical colorscheme as previous Moths. Crashed 1939.in Sarajevo

Blue
White
Red





DH60G Gipsy Moth YU-PAV c/n 1260 ex G-ABBG ex UN-PAV. Belgrade Aero Club, 1931-1933. Same scheme as previous Moths.

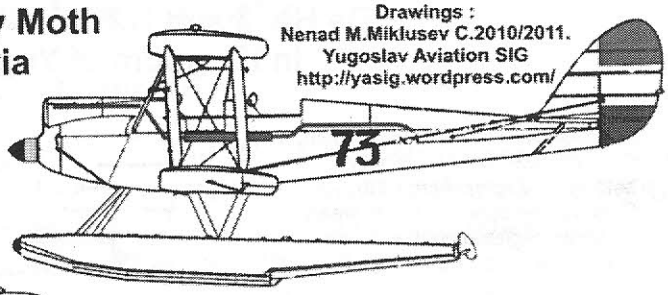


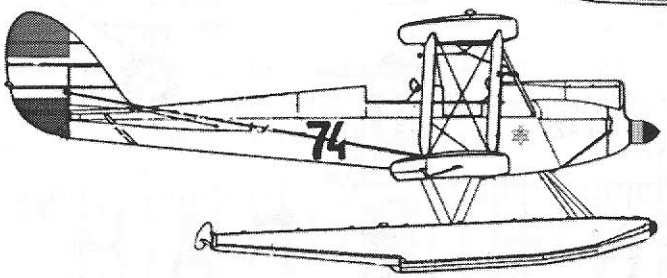
Drawings : Nenad M.Miklusev C.2010/2011.
Yugoslav Aviation SIG
http://yasig.wordpress.com/

De Havilland D.H.60 G Gipsy Moth in Kingdom of Yugoslavia

Drawings :
Nenad M.Miklusev C.2010/2011.
Yugoslav Aviation SIG
http://yasig.wordpress.com/

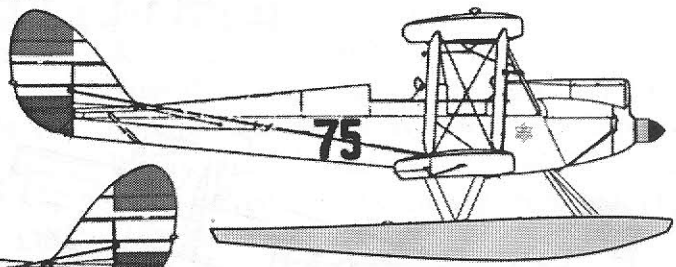
DH 60 G Moth black No73
Overall blue gray FS 16350-16360
Crashed in Boka Kotorska 1933,killing sgt Anžić.

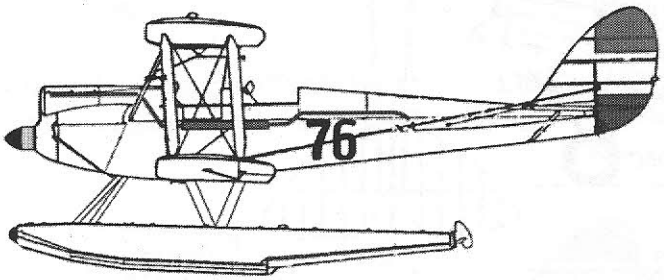




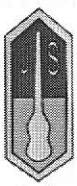
DH 60 G Moth - black No74
26th wing 2nd Naval command/
Divulje-Split-Croatia
On April 12th 1941, sgt Ljubo Beseljak and Viktor Petrič were drown after the unsuccesfull take off from Divulje/Split Naval base.

DH 60 G Moth black No75
Overall blue gray FS 16350-16360
New ,local built wooden floats since 1937.

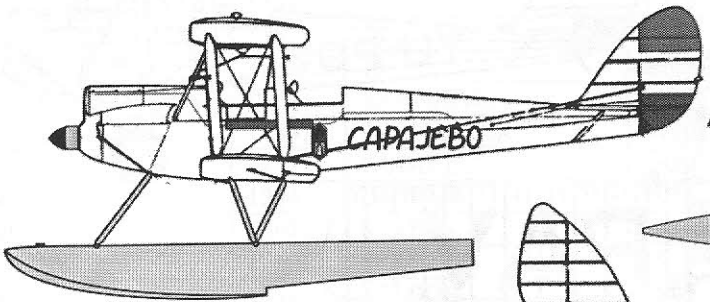




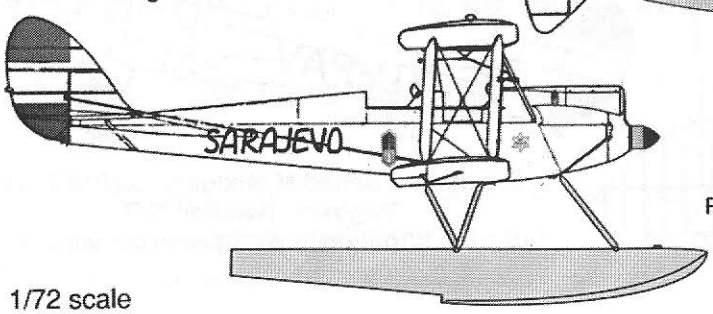
DH 60 G Moth black No76
5th wing 2nd.Naval Command base Divulje
Overall blue gray FS 16350-16360



Adriatic Sentry badge



DH 60 G Moth Divulje/Split April 1941,
c/n 1189, "Sarajevo", Overall silver scheme with RYAF roundels on wings in 4 positions,state flag on the rudder and inscription SARAJEVO in black on both fuselage sides.



RYAF roundell

1/72 scale

Dutch Rumpler C.VIII

Frits Gerdessen

In 1918 the Dutch Luchtvaartafdeeling (LVA) at last could acquire modern aircraft from abroad: 40 Rumpler C.VIII from Germany. The type became the LVA's second workhorse (1), but not for long, being grounded in November 1919.

During WW.1, the Luchtvaartafdeeling (LVA), based at Soesterberg under command of kapt. H. Walaardt Sacré (C.LVA) had great difficulties obtaining aircraft, materials, engines, fuel, oil, etc. As a result, only a few pilots could be trained, and on 1 January 1918 only 19 pilots were available.

Early in 1917, permission was given to order 5 Nieuport 21, 5 Nieuport 23, and 10 Caudron G.4 from France. Of these, only the Nieuports and 5 of the Caudrons arrived and that was not until June 1918.

More success was had in Germany. On 1 October 1917, 10 Fokker D.III arrived at Soesterberg. Then it appeared that Germany was willing to sell more aircraft and this led to an order for 40 Rumpler C.VIII. Payment was complicated, as Germany wanted, among other things, 5,000 horses.

The Rumpler C.VIII was the final model in a series that started with the C.I in 1915 and that was continually refined. The Rumpler Flugzeugwerke G.m.b.H. at Johannisthal (Berlin) produced excellent reconnaissance aircraft in large quantities: C.I, C.IV, and C.VII.

In Germany, the C.VIII was an operational trainer for aircrew destined for attack and reconnaissance duties. The Fliegertruppe felt the need for a training aircraft with the same performance as the frontline aircraft. The C.VIII had the 180 hp Argus As III engine that was of a slightly lesser quality than the Mercedes and Benz engines. In addition to training, it was also used for Heimatschutz (air defence). The C.VIII passed its Typenprüfung (type test) successfully on 24 November 1917 and 200 were ordered with Bestellnummer (serials) 12400-12599/17. Apparently more were ordered later.

The Rumpler Enters Dutch Service

The contract for the Dutch Rumplers was signed late in 1917 and on 7 March 1918 lt. W.C.J. Versteegh departed for Berlin for their acceptance. He returned on 21 April, having accepted 24 aircraft, but only 8 had arrived by the 25th.

From 10 July to 10 August, lt. Versteegh was again in Germany to accept the remaining aircraft. On 21 August, 19 arrived at Soesterberg. The last batch arrived on 25 September at Aalsmeer, but these were stored for some time because of the lack of capacity to assemble them.

The 40 Ru C.VIII were drawn from a batch destined for the Fliegertruppe, and thus built under German Bauaufsicht. They arrived in three batches in 1918:

25 April	8	s/n R417-R424
21 Aug.	19	s/n R447-R465
25 Sept.	13	s/n R466-R478

It is not quite clear whether the 2nd and 3rd batches had serials R447-R478 or R448-R479 (see later). Only two Bestellnummer for LVA aircraft are known: 12521/17 and 13063/17.

Most likely, the first Ru C.VIII's were flown in early May by lt. Versteegh and kapt. F.A. van Heijst (2), the latter a test pilot, and also by 2nd lt. P.M. van Wulfften Palthe who was a specialist on interned German aircraft (Albatros B-types, DFW C.V, Rumpler C.I).

In 1917, two Rumpler C.I's had been interned and impressed into Dutch service; thus the characteristics of the type were well known. As Rumpler aircraft came into use in larger numbers, troubles soon occurred. The Ru C.VIII was very different from the other LVA types, and especially from the Farman HF.22 used for primary training. The ground crew had to get used to a more thorough servicing and the pilots had to learn that the Rumpler had to be flown with ballast when no observer came along. In addition, the plane had a wheel instead of a control stick. The plane was also very sensitive to rudder control. There were also engine problems. The Argus was prone to catch fire when the fuel pipes broke. More than once, pilots avoided disaster by a quick landing. This latter problem was reduced when the Technische Dienst made modifications to avoid vibration of the fuel pipes.

Thus there were soon many crashes and by the time the second batch arrived only four Rumplers remained. The War Minister got the idea that the

LVA had acquired inferior equipment, but the C.LVA (now major Walaardt Sacré) protested vehemently against this view. He was supported by his technicians, ir. H.A.Vreeburg (Chef Technische Dienst) and ir. B.Stephan. Nevertheless, the Rumpler had got a bad reputation.

Many LVA pilots had difficulties with the type, but others had no problems at all. As pilots were reluctant to fly the type, only volunteers were trained on it.

The Ru C.VIII was to become the LVA's workhorse and was intensively used at Soesterberg and the new LVA base at Schiphol. A few aircraft were used as dual control trainers.

On 15 October 1918, the 3rd and 4th Escadrille were formed. They were also known respectively as the 1st reconnaissance unit (Verkennings Vliegtuig Afdeeling, VVA) and the 1st artillery unit (Artillerie Vliegtuig Afdeeling, AVA), and were commanded respectively by 1st lt. C. Land and 1st lt. J.G.C. Duinker. Both units had 4 aircraft: the AVA received Rumplers R417, R422, R452, and R461. On 1 November, the AVA started the training of 15 artillery observers, and a pupil pilot who was also posted to the unit.

After the Anmistice

The Armistice of 11 November 1918 had its effect on the Dutch forces; demobilization plans that had been made were put in effect. This affected the LVA which lost a lot of its trained conscript personnel, including some pilots and observers. On 14 November, an order was received not to fly the Rumplers. The C.LVA protested, and the ban was soon lifted. At several places there was unrest in the Army, but the C.LVA managed to keep his unit quiet. It may be added that the LVA personnel were highly motivated. During WW.1, many soldiers in the mobilized army had applied for a posting to the LVA, and the C.LVA, Walaardt Sacré, could pick the best, preference going to skilled craftsmen. Several of these men served until 1940, some even after WW.2.

Because of the lack of personnel, the 3rd and 4th Escadrille were disbanded in November 1918. It was several months before the LVA again had sufficient personnel for normal service.

In the last weeks of WW.1, tension mounted as the fighting in Belgium approached the Dutch border. Later, in 1919, it was asked what operational units the LVA could have fielded on 1 November 1918 to protect the Dutch border. It was determined that since the Rumplers were still unarmed, the only combat aircraft available were interned aircraft, with a limited store of ammunition. It would only have been possible to organize two 6-plane recce units. Also at that time, the LVA had only 32 pilots including those unfit after being injured in crashes, etc.

The LVA made its first flight abroad with two Ru C.VIII. On 14 May 1919, R458 (pilot lt. H.G. van Voorthuijsen and kapt. G.A. de Brauw) and R462 (pilot lt. J.G.C. Duinker and lt. A.C. Perk) departed for a flight to København (Copenhagen, Denmark). R458 and R462 had extra fuel tanks fitted for the trip. Mindful of the risk of fire, lt. van Voorthuijsen had ir. Stephan wrap the fuel pipes of R458 with rubber before the trip. However, after only some 50 km the wireless in R458 broke down and the planes lost contact in the clouds over Germany. Bucking a strong headwind, R458 arrived at Kløvermarken airfield after 7¼ hrs with less than 20 liters of fuel remaining. The crew was welcomed by Oberstløytnant (lt.kol.) J.P. Koch (3), commander of Haerens Flyvertjeneste (Army Air Service), and his men. There was no sign of R462.

Next day, a telegram from Soesterberg informed the crew of R458 that R462 had crashed in flames near Oldenburg, both crew being killed.

There was to have been an aviation show at Kløvermarken, but because of the crash of R462 and another fatal crash this was cancelled. One of the demonstrators would have been Hermann Göring with his Fokker D.VII.

R458 was thoroughly overhauled by the Danish Haerens Flyvertjeneste, and on the 21st, the Rumpler was flown back to Soesterberg in record time (5¼ hrs), helped by a strong tailwind. Next day, lts. Duinker and Perk of R462 were buried.

Also in May, a 4-plane Rumpler detachment, with one Fokker D.III, was based at Ede for testing the Groeneveld Meyer bomb gear. R448 was lost due to a fire in a hangar at the J.B. Carley's aircraft factory and flying school.

During August-September 1919, the LVA, with its Rumplers, Nieuports, and Trompenburg V.2 trainers, was prominent at the ELTA (4) and took part in several contests.

Fate struck again on 24 November 1919. R465 caught fire during a training sortie and crashed at Soesterberg, both crew (instructor lt. C. Land and pupil lt. M.C. van Dijk) being killed. The new C.LVA (5), kapt. J.H.Hardenberg (6), after consulting kpt. van Heijst and ir. Stephan (who had succeeded ir. Vreeburg), then grounded the type until the technical problems could be solved. This decision meant that the LVA could now only fly its Trompenburg V.2 primary trainers, an aircraft unsuitable for observer training, etc.

The Rumplers are Grounded

Kpt. Hardenberg soon had a report ready. The Rumpler already had a bad reputation both in the press and with the politicians. For example, it was said that the Rumpler was built with inferior materials; kpt. Hardenberg denied these statements. Although the building materials were, because of war shortages in Germany, no longer of prime quality, the German stress requirements and supervision had been adjusted so that the aircraft had the required strength. But it could not be denied that the fuel pipes were brittle.

The C.LVA realized that the pilots distrusted the Rumpler, and that soon Fokker aircraft would be delivered (7). But he did not consider it advisable to retire the type, and asked for authorization to make the following modifications that would make the planes safe:

- new fuel pipes
- a better carburetor, better situated
- a firewall

This would cost about *f* 400-500 per aircraft, in all at most *f* 15.000 (30 aircraft). Permission was not granted.

On 15 January 1920, the War Minister appointed an investigation committee, called for short the "Rumplercommissie". Among its members were some pilots and technicians: ir. Stephan (TD), ir. J.C.G. Grasé (RSL, State Aviation Study Institute), and the German pioneer pilot, Ing. Bruno Jablonsky who had started a factory in Holland.

The committee sent questionnaires to as many pilots as they could find, and consulted several outside specialists.

Rumpler's General-Direktor Edmund Rumpler and Direktor Aumer had read in the press about the problems with their product. They arrived on 20 April at Soesterberg to see for themselves. The Germans explicitly dismissed problems with the flying characteristics since all Rumpler aircraft had given excellent service in the German Fliegertruppe.

There were critics of the Argus engine, which had the carburetor poorly situated. In addition, the Zenith carburetor was badly designed. Major Felix Wagenführ, a highly competent former Fliegertruppe technical staff officer, reported that harsh words had been exchanged in discussions with the Zenith firm. In case a fuel pipe broke, the starving engine would backfire over the carburetor and set it alight. The fuel pipes were made of excellent copper, but the production process was faulty causing them to be brittle. The Fliegertruppe had succeeded in overcoming this problem by installing new fuel pipes and repositioning the carburetor.

The committee had its report ready by 9 July 1920. By that time, delivery of Fokker D.VII and C.I aircraft was well under way and these types surpassed everything the LVA had used before. Ing. Jablonsky suggested the exchange of the Ru C.VIII for the LVG C.VI, one of the best German recce aircraft. This came to nothing.

In March 1921, the War Minister informed Parliament that the Ru C.VIII would be retired. Before this he had given permission to convert 3 as taxying trainers (most likely R456, R457, and R458; reserialled as R2, R3 and R4).

Now it was time to sell the Rumplers, as there was considerable lack of space at Soesterberg; a lot of interned German aircraft were still in storage. Early in 1922, the Sablatnig company was interested, but that came to nothing. Despite the storage problems, it was not until 1925 when the Rumplers, along with the interned and other obsolete aircraft, were sold. As late as 1934, there were Rumpler fuselages in storage. Some, with engines, were used as instructional airframes, and other fuselages were used for gunnery training at the firing range.

Of 25 Rumplers available for sale in 1922, 19 had, at most, 20 flying hours, the remaining six had 36 to 200 hours. Of the pilots, lt. H.van Weerden Poelman had the maximum flight time on the Rumpler: 355 hrs. He had had no problems at all, whereas lt. J.Balder had only 5 minutes as he had crashed on his first solo flight. At least two other pilots had over 100 hrs on the Rumpler.

Thus the first large acquisition of the LVA ended in failure.

Individual aircraft

417 w/o 01-25. Over 10¾ hrs. 417 carried large white serials.
418 04-10-18: Hit a flagpole at Soesterberg during a training sortie and crashed. Student pilot 1st lt. A.N.S.W.L. Coblijn suffered many fractures. The instructor was 1st lt. J.G.C. Duinker.
419 04-09-18: 2nd lt. J. Balder crashed after take-off on his first solo flight and broke his leg. Over 3¾ hrs.
420 w/o 01-25. Over 23 hrs.
421 06-06-18: Crashed at Soesterberg. Pilot 1st lt. P.M. van Wulffften Palthe and passenger 1st lt. L.M. van Reijgersberg Versluijs. The passenger was an adjutant of Prince Hendrik.
422 w/o 01-25. Over 14 hrs.
423 w/o 01-25. Fuselage used for training.
424 23-07-18: Crashed due to error by pilot 1st lt. J.P.van Oosten.

447 w/o 01-25.
448 19-05-19: Burned in hangar at Ede, with Argus 2450.
449 w/o 01-25.
450 05-03-19: Somersaulted near Schiphol. 1st lt. A.K. Steup (C.Det. Schiphol) and mec. A.van Eenige. 1920?: Taxying trainer. w/o 01-25.
451 w/o 01-25.
452 w/o 01-25.
453 w/o 01-25.
454 24-03-19: Mec. W.F.Bosman hit by the propeller. 07-05-19: Stood on its nose on the St. Pietersberg at Maastricht. The pilot was sgt.maj. J.W. van der Drift. Repaired on site. w/o 01-25.
455 w/o 01-25.
456 1921:Taxying trainer. w/o before 1925. Over 43 hrs.
457 13-05-19: On its nose near Soesterberg with kapt. F.A.v.Heijst and kapt. H.G. Winkelman (8). 1921: Taxying trainer. w/o before 1925.
458 Arrived with Argus 2703. 14-05-19: Flown to København by 1st lt. H.G. van Voorthuijsen, kapt.wnr. G.A. de Brauw. 21-05-19: Returned to Soesterberg. 1921: Taxying trainer. w/o before 1925.
459 w/o 01-25.
460 w/o before 1925.
461 20-01-19: Emergency landing by 1st lt. H. van Weerden Poelman (9) with kpt.wnr. J.H. Hardenberg (C.LVA).
462 14-05-19: On the way to København it crashed on fire near Oldenburg (Germany). Crew killed: 1st lt. J.G.C. Duinker and 1st lt.wnr. A.C. Perk.
463 w/o 01-25.
464 06-02-19: Kpl. H.J.Ubels injured during engine test. 26-03-19: Ran into the sea after landing at Katwijk beach; pilot lt. R.Drost. w/o 01-25.
465 24-11-19: Crashed on fire at Soesterberg during training flight. Crew killed: 1st lt.instr. C. Land and 1st lt. M.C. van Dijk. This is the crash that led to the grounding of all Ru C.VIII.
466 1920(?): Gunnery fuselage. 30-04-21: Kpl.mec. G.M.H. Frijns (10) injured as the engine suddenly started. 25-05-21: On the firing range kpl. D. van Deijl was hit by the propeller. w/o 01-25.
467 w/o 01-25.
468 w/o 01-25.
469 w/o 01-25.
470 w/o 01-25. Over 17½ hrs.
471 22-02-19: w/o, cause not known. Over 27½ hrs.
472 w/o 01-25. Over 61 hrs.
473 w/o 01-25. Over 13 hrs.
474 w/o 01-25.
475 w/o 01-25.
476 w/o 01-25.
477 w/o 01-25.
478 w/o 01-25.

There were other crashes, but the serials are not known.

Several pilots reported to the Rumplercommissie the planes they flew and their flying hours:

Lt. J. Jongbloed: total hrs unknown; flew R461.

Lt. G.P. van Hecking Colenbrander: 97¼ hrs; R419 3¾, R456 42½, R417 6¼, R470 17½, R471 27½ hrs.

Lt. H.v. Weerden Poelman: 355 hrs on R417, R449, R455, R463, R466.

Lt.H. Schlimmer: 25 hrs on R420, R475, R476.

Lt. A.K. Steup: 70 hrs.

Lt. G.A.Koppen: unknown, mostly instructing

Lt. H.G. van Voorthuijsen: 153 hrs; R420 23, R422 14, R458 42, R472 61, R473 13 hrs.

sgt. J. Tjaarda: R417 4, R456 ½, R461 2¼ hrs.

Flown at the ELTA: R417, R423, R424, R466, R471, R475.

A list for October 1918 mentions R417, R420, R422-R424, and R449-R479. This probably means that R424 was not w/o after the mentioned crash. But, R449-R479 accounts for only 31 aircraft. So was 448 forgotten?

The Argus engines were built by both Argus and (by license) by Opel. The identities of 37 are known: 26 Argus and 11 Opel. During the twenties, the Argus was used for instruction. One of the tests for student pilots was to get a deliberately-disabled fuselage-mounted Argus running. In 1926, one Argus was donated to the Middelbare Technische School in Amsterdam .

Interned Rumplers

1. On 28 December 1916, Rumpler B.I Nr. 1027/14, strayed over the border at Nijmegen during a training flight, hit a roof, and crashed. Uffz.Fl. Heyartz and Lt.Fl. Theo Maria Joseph von der Beek, EK, were unhurt. The plane was wrecked, but the 100 hp Mercedes survived and was used by the LVA. Whether the engine was bought is not clear.

2. Rumpler C.Ia 968/17 landed on 23 August 1917 near Elburg. Its pilot, Lt. Heinz Brandt, under training at the Geschwaderschule in Paderborn, got lost on a cross-country flight. LVA personnel checked and refuelled the undamaged Rumpler. After Dutch markings were painted on, lt. van Heijst flew the plane to Soesterberg,. The plane received LVA serial LA49, which was changed to R409 in December 1917. The C.LVA offered to buy the Rumpler on 15 October 1917, but this offer was withdrawn on 28 October 1918.

3. On 1 December 1917, a German corporal landed Rumpler C.I 2560/17 near Geldrop. He had come from Belgium and came down near soldiers playing football who captured him at once. The plane was impressed with serial R410, but on 5 February 1918 it crashed at Soesterberg and was destroyed. Pilot lt. R. Drost was unhurt, and the Benz engine survived for future use. The C.LVA offered to buy the C.I, but the offer was withdrawn after the crash.

4. Rumpler C.I, 8364/17, from the Fliegerschießschule at Asch in Belgium, landed at Nederweert on 29 October. The crew, pilot Draht and mechanic Dausner, said they had been lost in fog, but defection was suspected. The undamaged C.I may have been given the serial R480.

After the Armistice, many German aircraft returned home from the Western Front by flying over Belgium and The Netherlands, and several landed on Dutch territory. Among these were;

5. Rumpler C.IV 7615/17 that landed at Beegden on 12 November. The plane was undamaged. The crew was not interned, as the war had ended, and they were allowed to travel to Germany. The Rumpler may have been given Dutch serial R482.

6. Another Rumpler landed on 14 November on a meadow at Kampen, but this ended in tragedy. C.VII 4462/18, had taken off from Brussels and had become lost in fog. After landing, the passenger, Vizefeldwebel Willy Frey, got out of the plane and handed his revolver to approaching soldiers. However, the pilot, Vizefeldwebel Wolfgang Bierner, tried to take off, but landed amidst the crowd that had come to the meadow. A couple and a girl were killed. Three other girls were injured. A military detachment, police, and some civilians managed to prevent the crew being lynched. In 1921, the German government paid compensation to the children of the couple that had been killed.

LVA serial system

From 1913, the LVA aircraft received a serial with the letters LA and a more or less chronological number. When LA50 was reached in 1917, the system became impractical. In December 1917, a new system was introduced, with different series for trainers, fighters, recce aircraft, etc.

The Ru C.VIII were numbered in the 400-series for recce aircraft. The serial was painted low on the rear fuselage along with information on the type. For example: R456O180:

R Rumpler
456 serial
O Opel (A for Argus was apparently not used)
180 engine power

National markings

Up until 1921, Dutch military aircraft carried orange disks in the usual 6 positions; the rudder was also orange. This marking had been in use since late 1913, when used by Lt. van Heijst on his (then personal) Farman HF.20 LA2. In August 1914, this national marking was authorized by the Opperbevelhebber (Supreme Commander), and thus Lt. van Heijst's initiative was legalized.

In 1921 the current red-white-blue roundel was introduced. It had already been used in the Netherlands East Indies from 1919 because the orange disk was considered too similar to the Japanese meatball.

Frits. Gerdessen (SAFCH #12), The Netherlands.

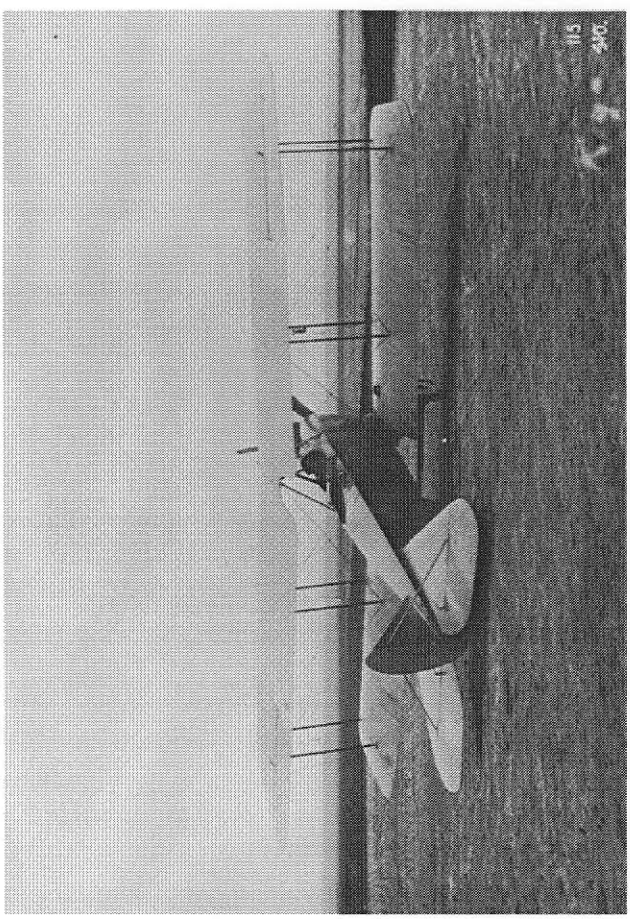
Notes

1. The first workhorse was the Farman HF.22, serving from 1914-1919 as recce aircraft and trainer.
2. F.A. van Heijst was the first Dutch military pilot. He has been trained in Holland before the LVA was founded. He became instructor, test-pilot, and senior pilot, and in 1937 C.LVA. In 1938-40 he was (as kolonel) Deputy Inspector of Military Aviation (IML).
3. Johan Peter Koch had spent many years in exploration of Grønland before he became a pilot. He was known as "Hovdingen" (the chieftain).
4. Eerste Luchtvaart Tentoonstelling Amsterdam = First Aviation Exhibition Amsterdam, 1 Aug. - 14 Sept. 1919.
5. Major H. Walaardt Sacré was promoted to lt.kol. in 1919, and this meant he had to be posted away from the LVA, which was a command for a captain or a major. This meant that the man who had built up the LVA was in fact removed. He took the consequences and resigned, and started a career in civil aviation.
6. Kapt. J.H. Hardenberg was trained as observer in 1915. He is the longest-serving Neth.AF commander: 10 years, 1 Nov. 1919 / 31 Oct. 1929.
7. In October 1918, combat aircraft for the LVA, Naval Air Service (MLD), and Neth.East Indies Army were ordered from Trompenburg. Of these only one V.3 fighter was completed and flown. Early 1919 Trompenburg offered Fokker aircraft, for which purpose Fokker delivered D.VII's and C.I's from Germany. In 1920 Trompenburg abandoned aircraft production, fully reverting to automobile manufacturing. Fokker took over the orders and delivery started in May 1920.
8. General H.G.Winkelman was supreme commander of the Dutch forces in 1940.
9. Kapt. H.van Weerden Poelman became commander of the JaVA (Fighter unit) in 1930, and in 1939-40, as a major, commanded the Jachtgroep Luchtverdediging (Air Defense Fighter Group).
10. G.M.H. Frijns was later a well-known KLM pilot.

Captions for Photos on pages 125-128

All photos via the author

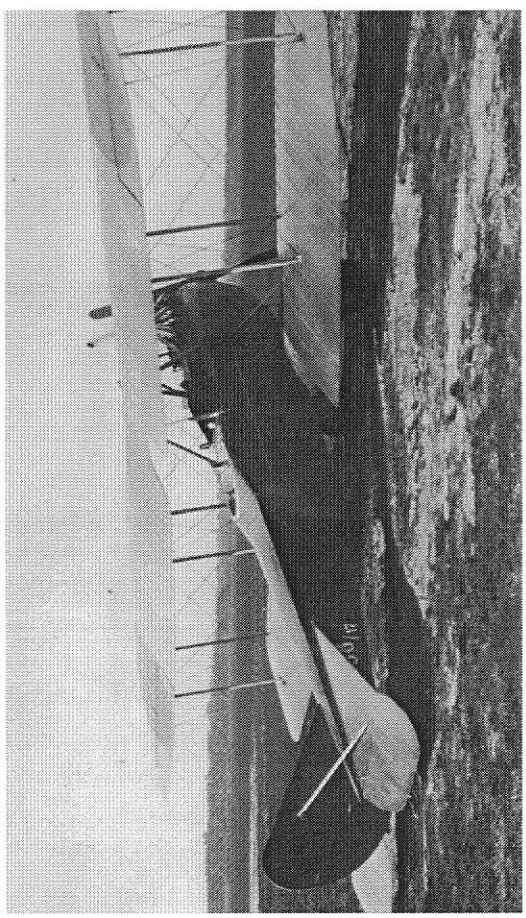
1. Rumpler C.I 2560/17 was interned intact on 1 December 1917. It was impressed with serial R410B160. (i.e., Rumpler 410, Benz 160 hp).
2. Lt. R. Drost crashed on take-off from Soesterberg with Rumpler C.I R410 on 5 February 1918. He was unhurt. The Benz motor was reused, but R410 was written off.
3. German Lt. Heinz Brandt got lost on a cross-country flight and landed at Elburg with Rumpler C.Ia (Argus 180 hp). Lt. F.A. van Heijst flew the plane to Soesterberg, the only occasion an interned aircraft was flown out. The plane was serialled LA49, then in December 1917 as R409O180 (i.e. Rumpler 409, Opel-Argus 180 hp). The plane was w/o in 1919.
4. Rumpler C.VIII R450 was converted to taxying trainer (roltoestel) by removing the fabric from the bottom wing.



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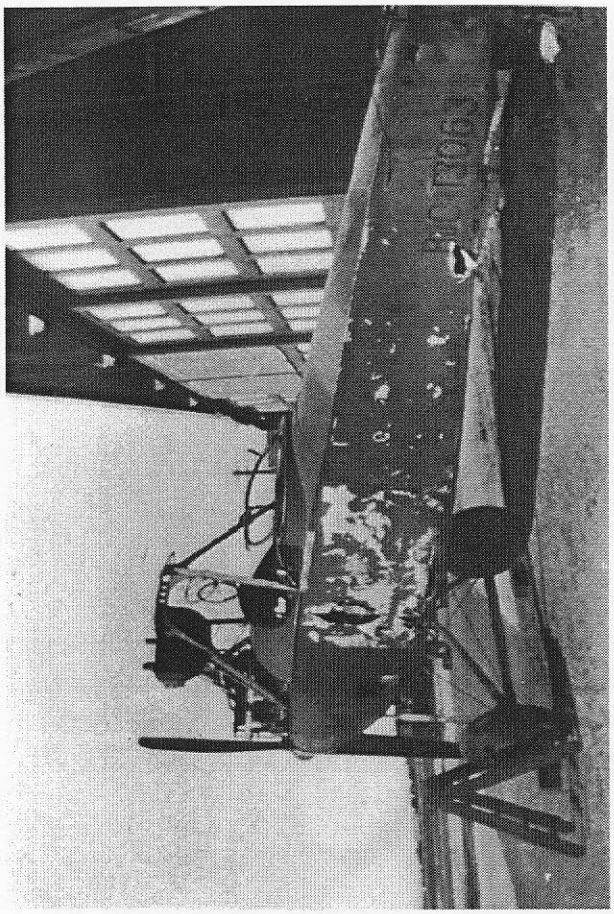
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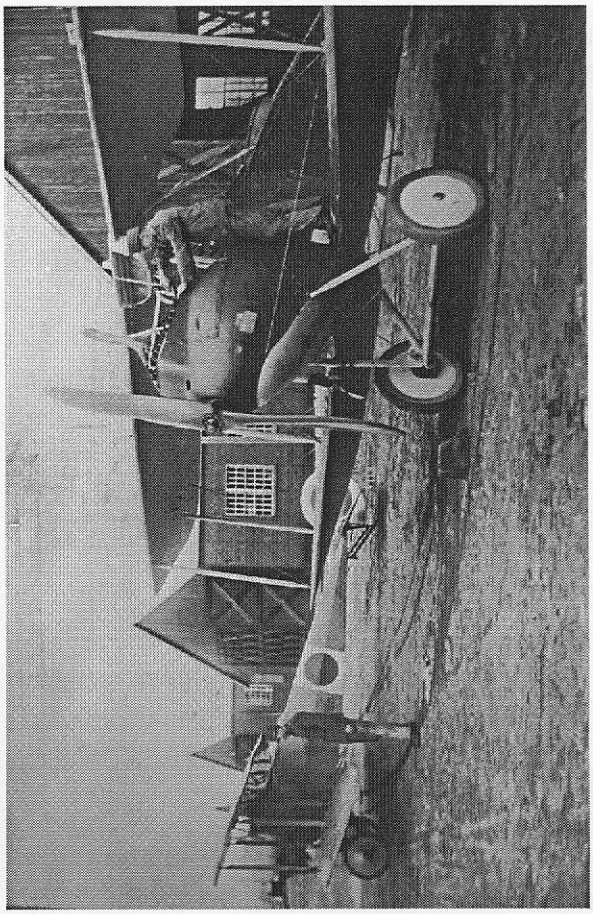
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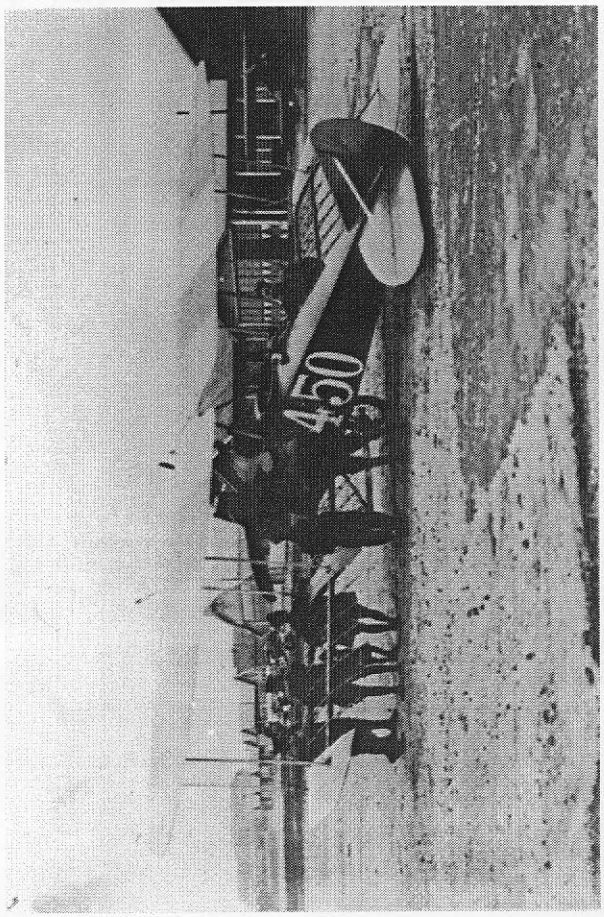
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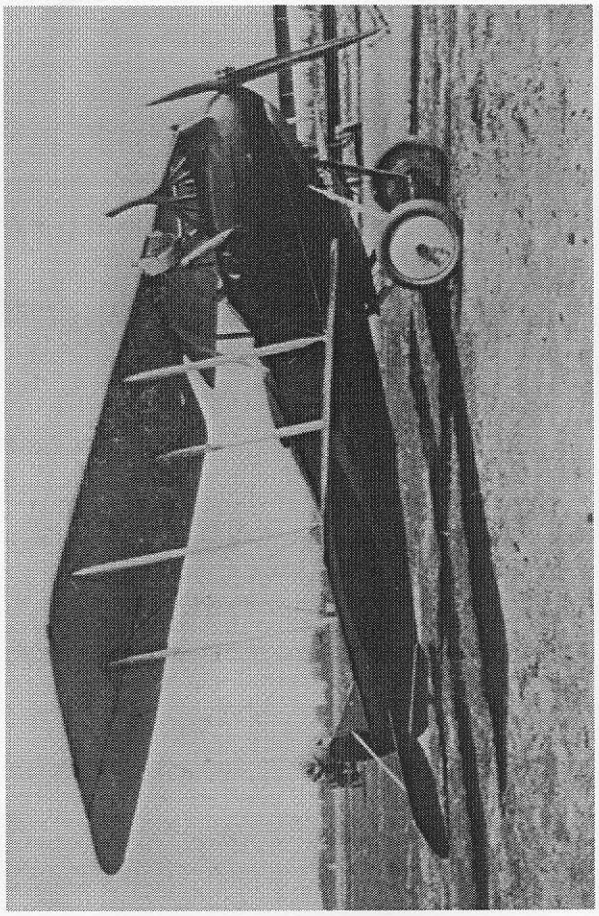
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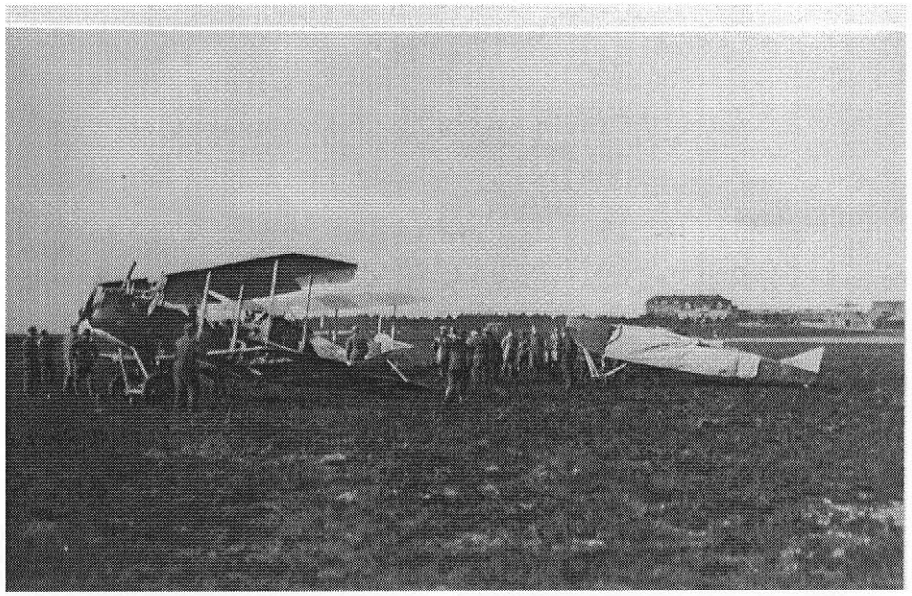
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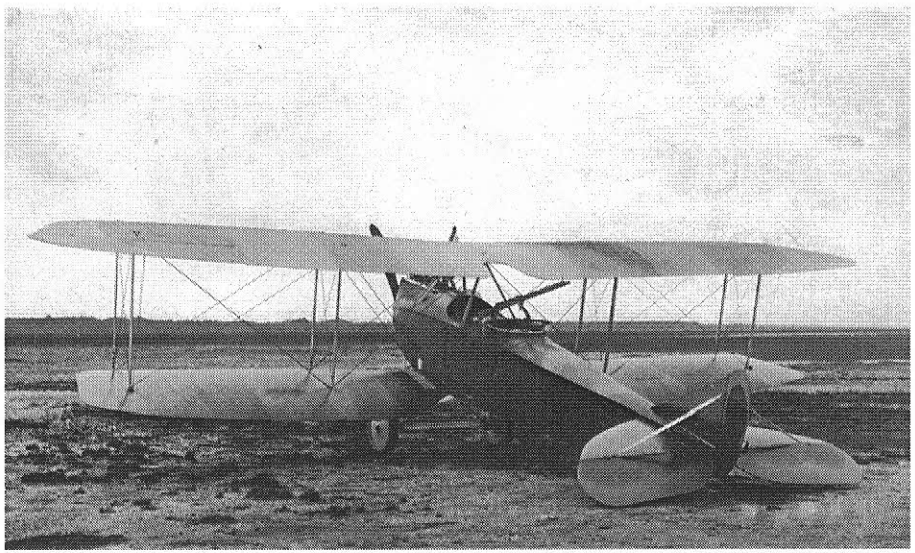
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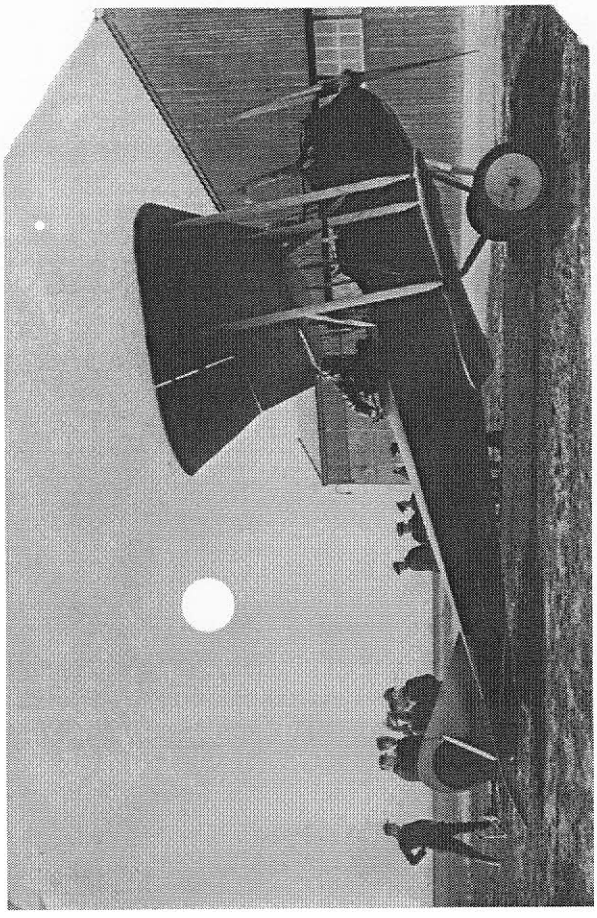
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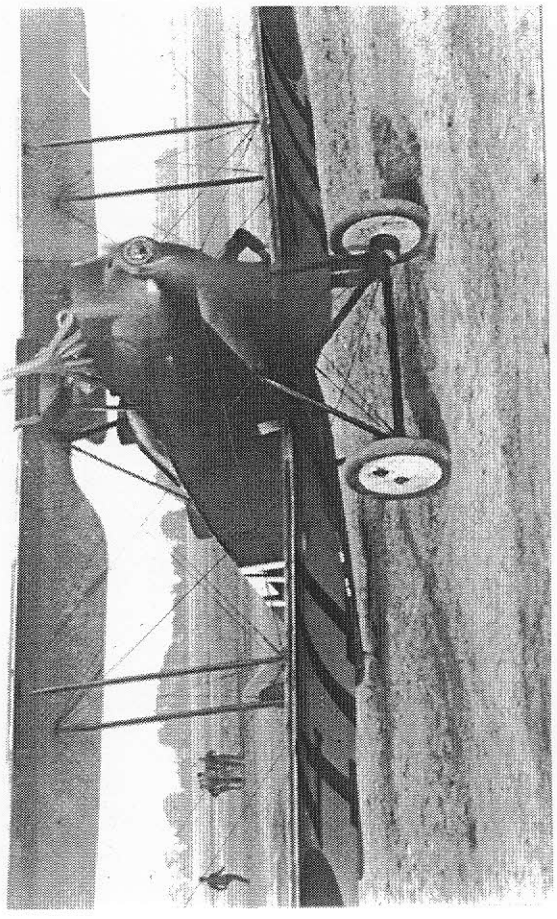
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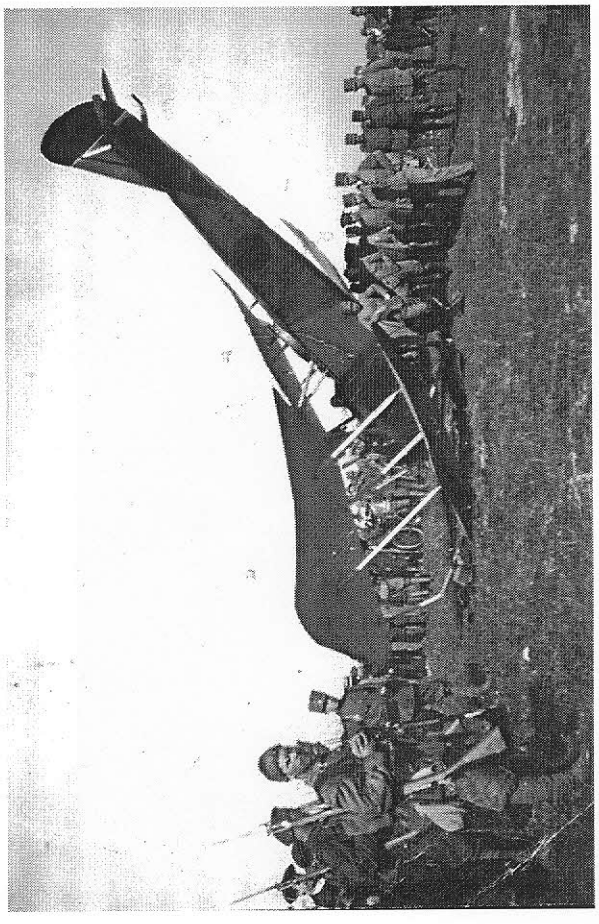
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14.



16.



13.



15.

New style large serials were painted on. Taxi training often ended in a crash, and there were always many spectators who would not miss the spectacle. The "pilot" is at the left.

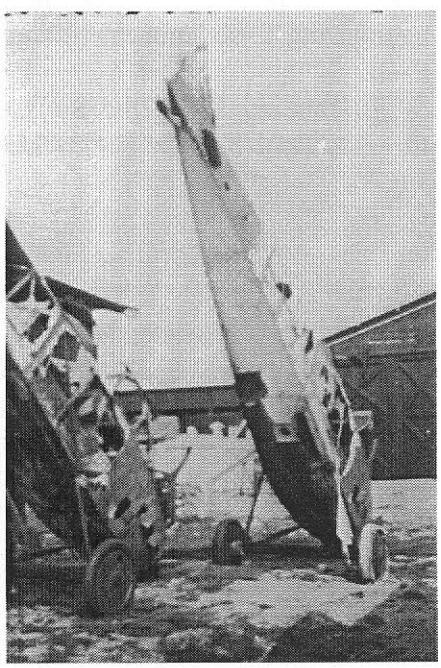
5. Rumpler C.VIII taxying trainer 450 at Soesterberg.
6. Rumpler C.VIII 13063/17 instructional airframe.
7. A Rumpler C.VIII at the ELTA exhibition carrying serial 21 for a contest.
8. A Rumpler C.VIII being serviced at Soesterberg. At left is a Fokker D.III with a mechanic standing in front of the serial.
9. One of the first Rumpler C.VIII.
10. At left is Rumpler C.VIII taxying trainer R2 with R1 behind it, at the right is the fuselage of R423.
11. Rumpler C.VIII with rear gun in place.
12. On 6 June 1918, Soesterberg was visited by Prince Hendrik (consort of Queen Wilhelmina). One of his adjutants, 1st lt. Jonkheer L. M. van Reijgersberg Verluijs made a flight with 1st lt. P. M. van Wulfften Palthe in Rumpler C.VIII R421. Due to pilot error, R421 crashed from about 100 meters. Lt. van Wulfften Palthe hurt his leg and was unfit for duty for 2 months. His passenger was unhurt. First on the left is Prince Hendrik talking with two officers. The Prince was not frightened; in the evening he made a flight in DFW C.V D407 with kapt. van Heijst. His adjutant Jhr. van Mühlen flew with lt. Versteegh, and lt. van Reijgersberg Versluijs with lt. Duinker (the latter having more flying experience).
13. On 7 May 1919, Rumpler C.VIII R454, flown by sgt. maj. J.W. van der Drift, crashed landed at the Sint Pietersberg at Maastricht. The plane was repaired on site.
14. Rumpler C.VIII R455 visiting the Naval Air base at De Kooij.
15. Rumpler C.VIII R456 with officers.
16. Rumpler C.VIII R471 with large serials.



Close up of Rumpler C.VIII motor of the aircraft in photo #9.



1st lt. H.G. van Voorthuijsen (left) and kapt. G.A. de Brauw with Rumpler R458 before departure for Kobenhavn.



These Rumpler fuselages were still at Soesterberg in 1934. Photo taken by L.J.W. Blommesteijn, who was killed while acting as an observer in Fokker T.5 862 on 10 May 1940.

Hawker Hunters in Swiss Service

Toni Ruffiner

The Swiss Air Force's first contact with the Hawker Hunter was in 1953 when Hawker test pilot Bill Bedford landed at Zürich-Kloten with the third Hunter prototype (WT555). In his subsequent demonstration flight, the sound barrier was broken for the first time in Switzerland. He flew his Hunter back to England after another demonstration at Emmen.

In 1955, a Swiss pilot went to England to test fly the Hunter FMk2. In 1956 at the International Meeting in Dübendord, Zürich, RAF 111 Squadron's "Black Arrows" acrobatic team, with five Hunter FMk4, made several impressive demonstrations flights. From 16 February to 10 March 1957, Swiss authorities, assisted by pilots Bill Bedford and David Lockspeiser from Hawker, evaluated a Hunter FMk6 (XE588) and a T7 (XJ627). From 21 May to 18 June 1957, a second evaluation of two FMk6 (XE587 and XE588) took place. (XE588 was equipped with a braking parachute.) The Hunter won the evaluation against the F-86 Sabre, Folland Gnat, and the Swiss P-16.

In January 1957, the Swiss Parliament approved the purchase of 100 Hawker single-seat Hunter Mk.58, and in April 1958 the first Swiss Hunters were flown from Kingston to Switzerland. The flight time was about one hour. During some of these delivery flights, French Mysteres engaged in mock combat with the Hunter. On occasions, Hunter flew so low that the Mysteres could not find them. The last Hunter of this batch arrived in Switzerland on April 6, 1960.

The first 12 of these aircraft (J-4001 to J-4012) were refurbished F6 from RAF stocks. The other 88 where new-built aircraft. Since the Swiss Hunters were to be used as a fighter they were equipped with Sidewinders and four 30 mm Aden cannons. (However, I've only seen one photo of Swiss Hunter carrying a Sidewinder.)

In 1971, the Swiss air force bought 30 refurbished F.58 from England. These were delivered between December 1971 and April 1973. The Hunter remained the primary Swiss fighter until replaced in that role by the Dassault Mirage IIIS in 1966.

In 1972, the Swiss began looking for a new attack plane. A competition between the Vought A-7D and the Dassault Mirage Milan resulted in no winner. Ultimately, the Swiss decided buy 22 Hunter single-seat F58 and eight two-seat Hunter T68. These were delivered between January 1974 and June 1975.

Thus, the Swiss bought a total of 152 F58 (J-4001 to J-4152) and eight T68 (J-4201 to J-4208).

The Swiss single-seat Hunters flew with Fliegerstaffeln (Squadrons) 1-8, 11, 15, and 18-21. In the fighter role, they replaced the de Havilland Vampire Mk6. In the attack role, they replaced the de Havilland Venom Mk1 and Mk4. The two-seat Hunters served with 24 Fliegerstaffel.

During their time in the Swiss air force, they received several modifications:

1962: a landing light and rocket launchers.
1964: UHF antenna and BT-9 bomb dropping system.
1971: IFF antenna.
1980: TABO low level bombs and updated rocket launchers.
1982 Flare and chaff dispensers; and on 40 Hunter, launchers for the Maverick missile.
1988: new UHF/SE-056 and VHF/SE010 antenna.

While in Swiss service, the Hunters flew a total of over 300,000 hours. 24 Hunters were lost resulting in the death of 14 pilots and 10 pilot ejected safely. Beginning in 1984, the Northrop F-5E replaced the Hunter in the attack role.

From 1964 to 1994, the Hunter was used by the Swiss aerobatic team Patrouille Suisse. In 1978, their Hunters were equipped with smoke generators, and in 1991 their undersides were painted red with white Swiss crosses.

Many of the Hunters still flying today around the world came from Switzerland. They can be identified by the dispensers for the flare on the gun extension. These are called sabrinas referring to a singer with a big breast.

Every Year in October, normally a time of very good weather, three Hunter T68 based at Sion AB are used to give paying customers the thrill of flying in a jet fighter.

Toni Ruffiner (SAFCH# 1721), Switzerland.



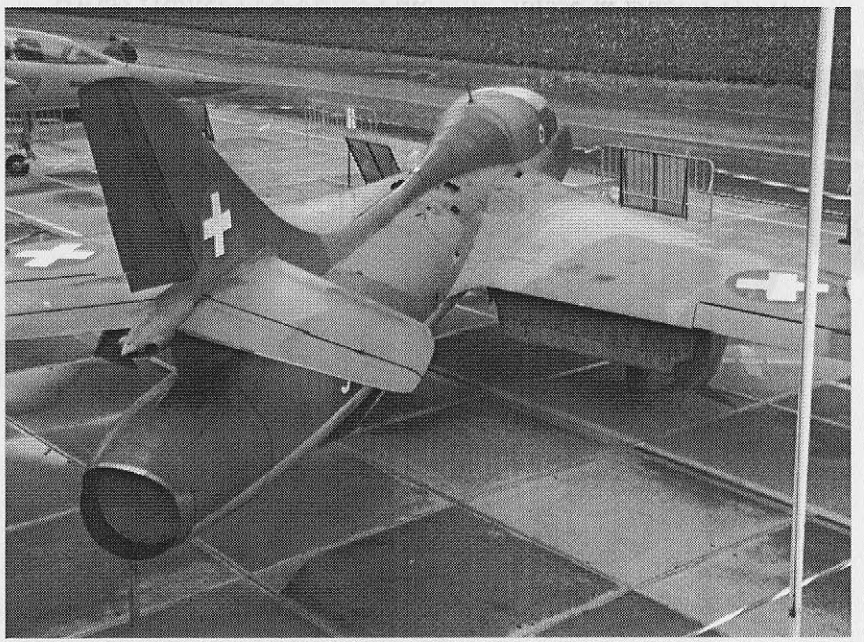
Swiss Hunter F58 J-4112 at Sion 2009 .



Swiss Hunters F58s at Payren 1991. J-4029 in front.



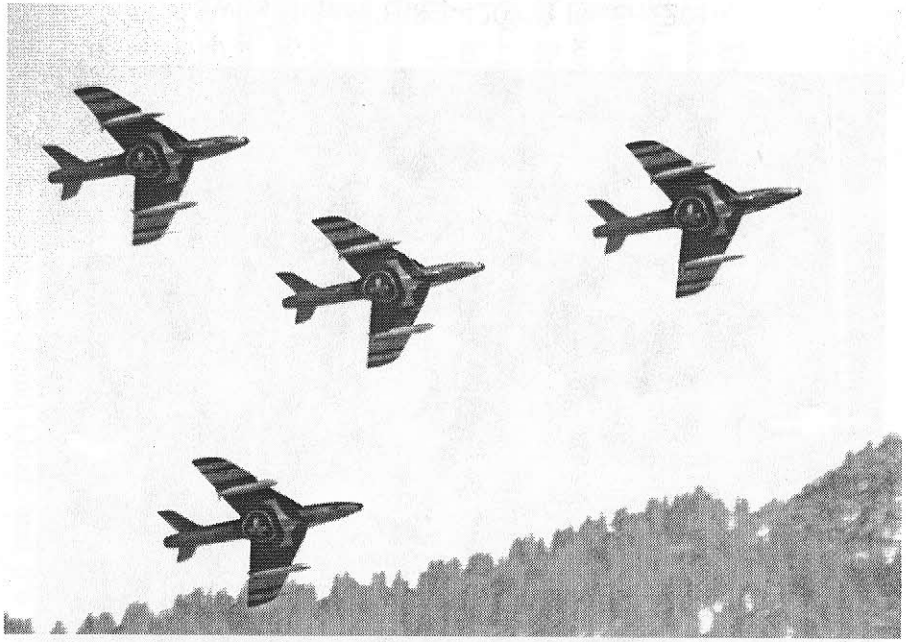
Swiss Hunter F58 J-4085 at Raron 1984.



Swiss Hunter T68 J-4203 at Payern 2010.



Swiss Hunter F58 of the Patouille Suisse at Buoch 1991.



Swiss Hunter F58 of the Patouille Suisse at Buoch 1991.



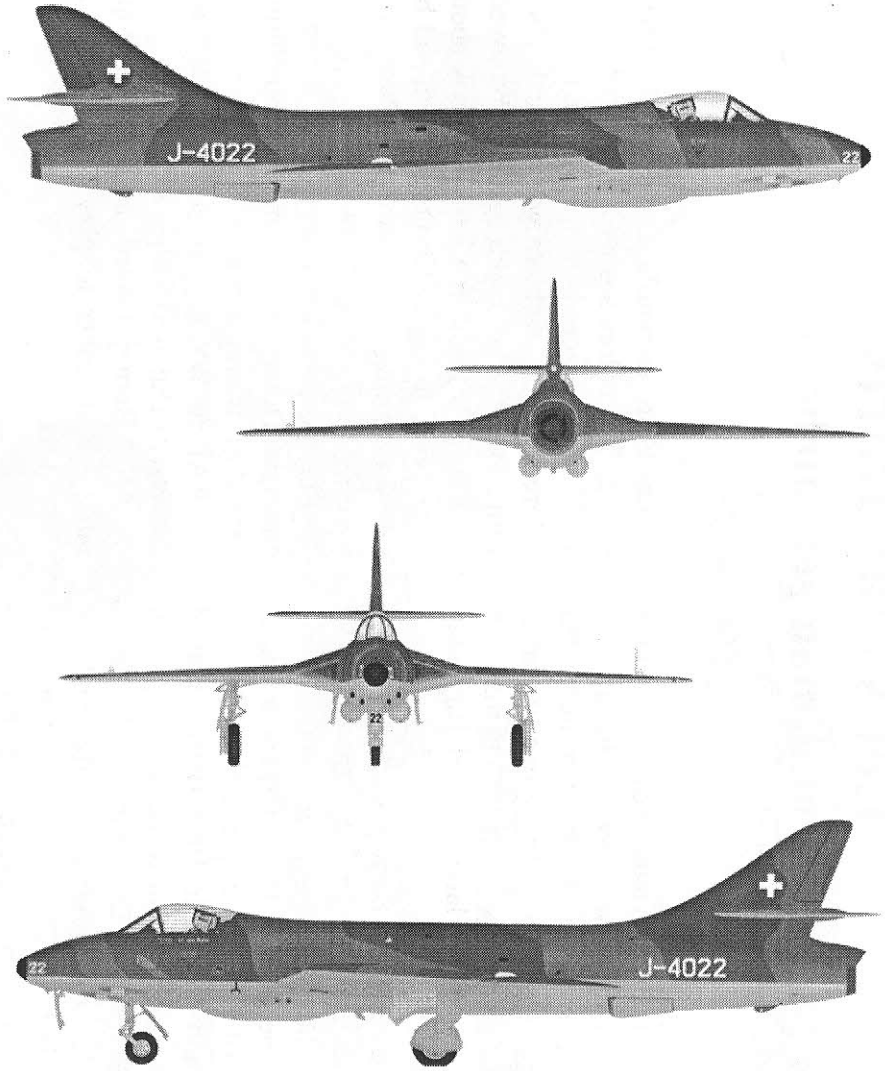
Swiss Hunter T68 J-4206 in Tiger scheme at Sion 2019.



Hunters at Sion in 2005. Used to give flights to paying customers.

Hawker Hunter Mk.58 J-4022
Patrouille Suisse
Lt. Beat Am Ryn 1979





Let's play Darts
A mailman gets airborne

Frans Scheve

It's the dream of every young boy to fly in a fighter plane. For many it will always be a well-cherished wish, for some it becomes a dedicated profession, for a few it becomes a 'once in a life time' experience. One of those few is a Dutch mailman from The Hague, the Netherlands, called Raymond 'Barney' van Barneveld.

Around the end of 1990, Barney started entering official dart games and a few months later he participated, at the Embassy, in the World Championship of the British Darts Organization. It was the beginning of a full time 'darting' career with the usual the ups and downs. In 1998 Barney played in the finals at the Embassy and wins, an exceptional result for a non-UK resident. One year later, he had to defend his World Championship title and he succeeded in doing so, and wins again. An achievement only one man did before him - a legendary event.

By this time, the pastime of playing darts had become very popular in the Netherlands. It was all a result of Barney's games and his promotional activities. In February 1999, Barney was a guest on Dutch TV Channel SBS6 in the program "*Toppers*" (Blockbusters). On this program, well-known people are interviewed in preparation for a personal wish to become true. Barney's wish was to fly in a jetfighter.

On Friday morning at half-past nine, February 19th, Barney arrived at Twenthe Air Base to have his flight in a jetfighter. After MoD approval and a medical checkup, it was a "Go!". The plane was a General Dynamics F-16B two-seater – very recently modified to MLU standard. The pilot for this occasion was Major Dennis Luyt of 315 Squadron. The F-16B, registration number J-211, had some modest markings to honor its VIP passenger. At the rear of the 2nd cockpit two ribbons were applied in the colors yellow and green, the colors of Barney's favorite soccer team ADO The Hague (NL). Also applied was the text 'THE LEGEND' in yellow letters. Otherwise, the aircraft had the usual Dutch markings and standard Dutch F-16 camouflage: FS36118, FS36270, and FS375. The colors are weathered, faded, and touched up in some places. On the tail, a toned-down grey colored 315 Sq. emblem was applied. The usual red-white Twenthe tail bands had been removed.

Barney's flight in a jetfighter took about a quarter of an hour, flying to Nijmegen town and back before safely returning to Twenthe Air Base. After landing his only words were: "Fantastic".

Playing darts has always been a popular pastime amongst Dutch service man - something probably passed on from the time when Dutch pilots served in the RAF in WW2. It is still a popular game in the canteen of Dutch 315 Sq – *The Lions*.

After Barney landed, a queue of people starts to build-up, all eager to play darts with a real World Champion.

Frans Scheve, (SAFCH #890), The Netherlands.

Explanation of notes on the drawing.

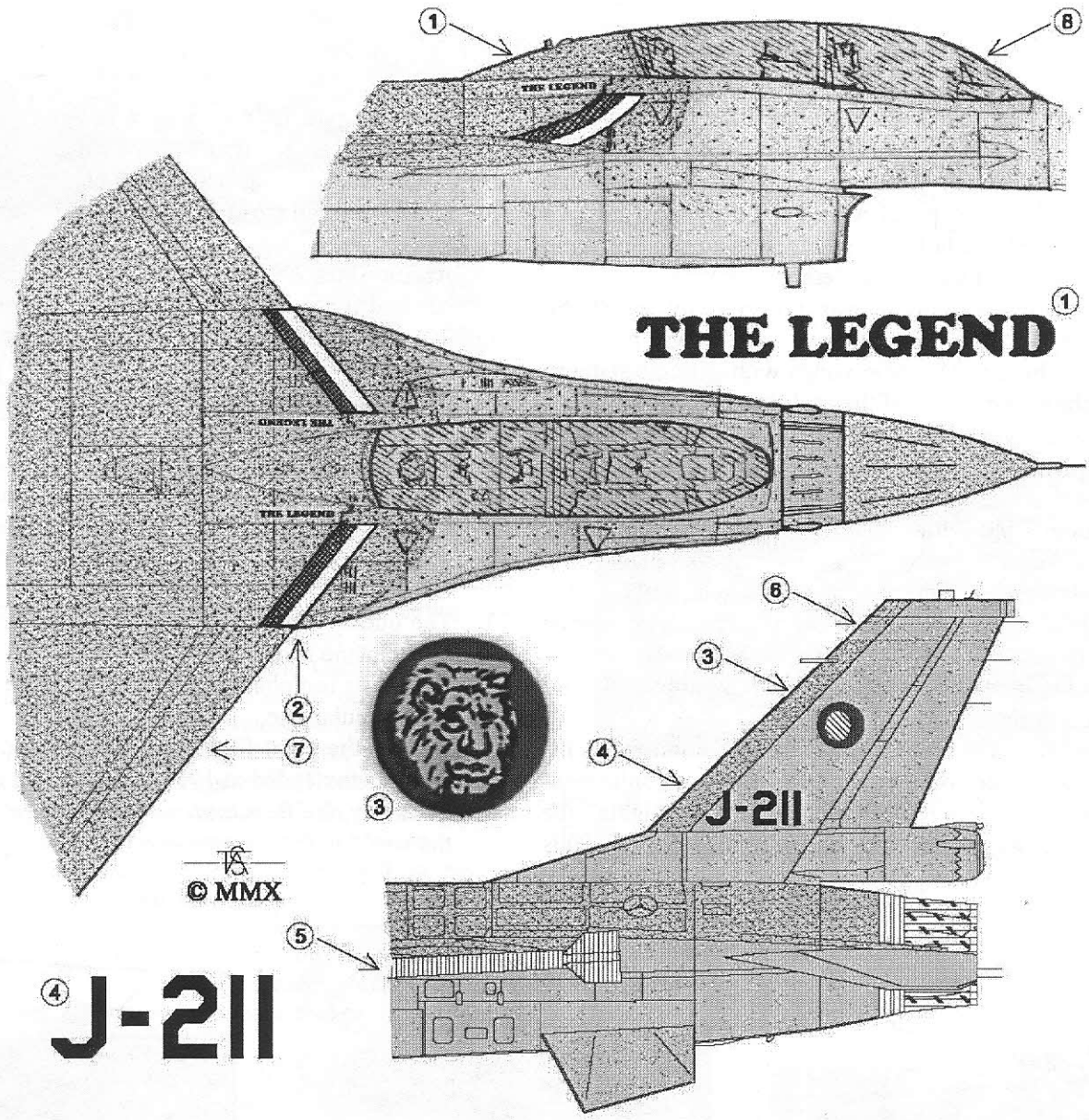
1- In yellow the text: THE LEGEND.
2- A ribbon in the colors yellow and green.
3- A gray toned-down 315 Squadron emblem.
4- Registration number J-211.
5- Dark blue colored dummy sidewinders.
6- Removed red-white colored tail band.
7- Auxiliary wing tanks during this flight.
8- Gold-metallic coated canopy glass.

Sources.

Newspaper *De Twentsche Courant Tubantia*, Saturday February 20th 1999.
Television Program *"Toppers"* SBS6 channel, Sunday February 28th 1999.
Koninklijke *Luchtmacht, Vliegbasis Twenthe, Staf Voorlichting*, Sgt-Majoor De Bruin.

Photo captions

1 – Barney being strapped into the F-16B cockpit.
2 – The start of J-211 from Twenthe Air Base.


THE LEGEND
THE LEGEND
J-211
© MMX
J-211





The triple-tandem monoplane of *Alexander A. Bezobrazov*

Rudolf Höfling

In June 1916, a Lieutenant of the Tsarist Navy, Alexander Alexandrovich Bezobrazov and the Italian Francesco Evgistovich Mosca, presented their new, at that time unarmed, prototype of a fighter plane. This aircraft can be described as a tailless triplane with an extreme wing stagger of 60°, or as a triple-tandem monoplane.

Bezobrazov's prototype was powered by an 80 hp Gnome rotary engine. Longitudinal stability was provided primarily by high-aspect-ratio wings with extreme stagger. A pylon above the center of the middle wing connected all three wings by wires. The wings were further connected by four interplane struts. [Ed: It is difficult to know what to call this configuration. Bezobrazov called it a "trimonoplan", but without explaining what he meant by that term. The author uses "triple tandem monoplane", but it is not a typical tandem monoplane as exemplified by the Miles Libellul. I was tempted to call it a "highly-staggered triplane" before I noticed there was no horizontal tail. So, let's use the author's "triple tandem monoplane", and leave it at that.]

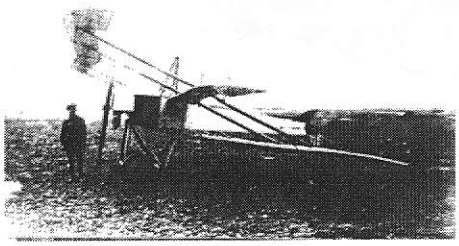
During World War I, Lt. Bezobrazov demonstrated his aircraft in a number of Russian cities to the astonishment of the public. During these demonstration flights, the fishtail rudder was replaced by one of circular design. This aircraft – despite its unorthodox design – showed quite good flying characteristics. However, because of the relatively large wingspan, the plane was not very manoeuvrable, and the Bezobrazov was not acceptable as a fighter plane.

At its final demonstration in 1917, the aeroplane crashed and the project of a triple-tandem monoplane was finally given up.

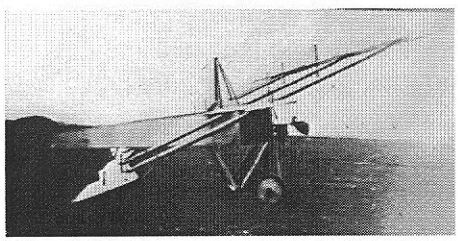
Rudolf Höfling (SAFCH #1590), Austria.

Captions for the photos

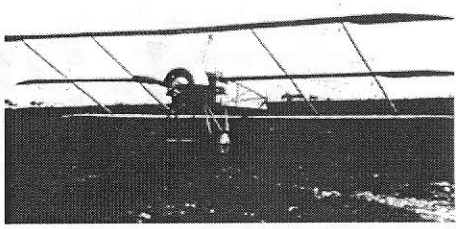
1. Alexander A. Bezobrazov, a Lieutenant of the Imperial Russian Navy, together with the Italian, Francesco Mosca, developed this unusual aircraft
2. Only one Bezobrazov was built.
3. The question if this aeroplane is a tandem-monoplane or a triplane is only academic.
4. During its test phase, the "fishtail" rudder was changed for a circular one.
5. Despite the good flight performance, the career of the Bezobrazov ended in 1917 with a forced landing.
6. In its day, the Bezobrazov was the largest aeroplane in the world without interplane-wire bracing.



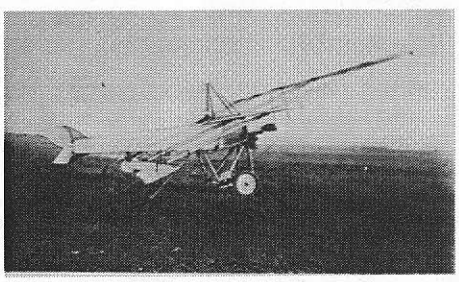
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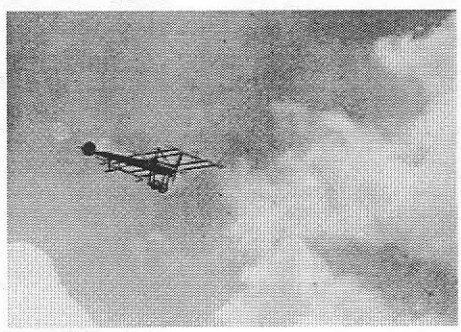
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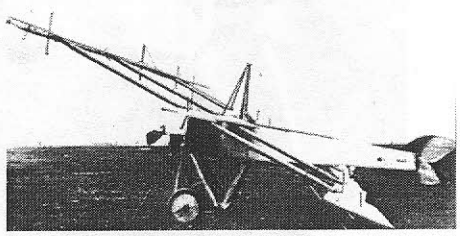
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Curtiss III, IV & H75-0 Hawk, by Fernando C. Benendetto. En Argentina #5. 36 A-4 pages landscape format. (2010) ISBN 978-987-1682-06-5. Published by Jorge Félix Núñez Padín, E-mail: jfnpadin@yahoo.com.

The number of Curtiss Hawk 75s operated by the Argentine military has been a source of much misinformation starting with Green and Fricker's seminal work *Air Forces of the World* in 1958. They wrote, "The licence for the Curtiss Hawk 75-0 single-seat fighter was also purchased, and the delivery of 200 of these aircraft began in 1940." The waters were further muddied in 1961 when *RAF Flying Review* (Vol. 16, No.5) reported "...thirty were acquired by Argentina (Hawk Model 75-0) together with a manufacturing licence ...". In the years since, these errors have been repudiated, but thye continue to be a source of much confusion. Therefore, it's good to have a detailed account of each individual Argentine Hawks. The true count is: 11 Hawk III (s/n 1-11), one Hawk IV (s/n 12), and 50 Hawk 75-0 (s/n 601-650). When this information is accompanied by this series' usual excellent photos and color drawings, you have a book that will warm the hearts of all lovers of early monoplane fighter aircraft.

Once more, the text is entirely in Spanish: "Historia" (9 pages); "Colores & Insignias" (1 page); "Tecnica" (4 pages); "Historias Individuales" (9 pages).

The 11 Hawk III and the one Hawk IV are illustrated by 22 b&w photos and 2 color profile drawings. The 50 Hawk 75 are illustrated by 46 b&w photos, 8 color photos; 2 color side/top drawings, and 3 color profile drawings.

The modeler is well served when it comes to 1/72-scale models of the Argentine Hawks. A kit of the Hawk III is available from MPM (#72043), and a kit of the Hawk 75-0 (with fixed landing gear) is available from Special Hobby (#72051). The former includes decals for two aircraft (Chinese and Thai), while the latter includes decals for three aircraft (Chinese, Thai, and Argentine). The Argentine decals are for the same aircraft illustrated by the color drawing in Jorge's book; '627' is in overall natural metal with a broad band around the fuselage immediately behind the cockpit. However, while the Special Hobby instructions indicate a 'red' band, the book shows a 'dark violet' band. Since the dedicated small-air-force modeler will probably buy two or more of the Special Hobby kits, the extra Argentine decals can be used to decorate the MPM Hawk III.

Latter on in service, the Argentine Hawk 75-0s were painted in a more belligerent olive drab over light blue gray camouflage with narrow yellow bands around the fuselage aft of the cockpit and chord-wise around the wings.

As usual with all of Jorge's publications the quality of the reproduction of the photos is excellent and the color profiles are outstanding, all being printed on the highest quality glossy paper. Highly recommended.

This book is available from the SAFCH Sales Service for $20.00.



F9F-2B Panther & TF-1J Cougar, by Jorge Félix Núñez Padín. Serie Aeronaval #29. 36 A-4 pages landscape format. (2010) ISBN 978-987-1682-03-4. Published by Jorge F. Núñez Padín, E-mail: jfnpadin@yahoo.com.

The modelers of aircraft of the small air forces have only one choice when it comes to building the excellent 1/72-scale Hasegawa kits of the Grumman F9F-2 Panther and TF-9 Cougar – the only small country to use these "cats" was Argentina. Therefore, we are fortunate to have this excellent book from Jorge Nunez of Argentina.

In 1958, the Argentine Aviacion Naval obtained 24 F9F-2B Panthers (s/n 0416-0427 and 0447-0458) and in 1962 two 2-seat TF-9J Cougars (s/n 0516-05617) were added acquired.

The Panthers participated briefly in one of Argentina's many revolutions. In his book, *Grumman Aircraft since 1929*, Francillon states, "In April 1963, after the unit had been transferred to BAN Punta del Indio, four Panthers were destroyed on the ground and one collided with an F4U-5 during a three-day coup pitting naval forces against the Army and the Air Force." However, a study of the "Individual Histories" in Nunez's book revealed that, on 03.04.63, four Panthers (s/n 0416, 0423, 0450, & 0457) were destroyed on the ground, and 0422 and 0424 collided in midair.

The Spanish-language text is organized into the usual chapters: "Historia" (6 pages), "Colores & Insignias" (1 page), "Tecnica" (6 pages), and "Historias Individuales" (3 pages). However, for the Spanish-language impaired, the value of this book lies in the photos and color illustrations. There are 72 photos including 21 in color; [Panther (66), Cougar (6)]; four color profile drawings [Panther (3), Cougar (1)]; and two color

2-view drawings, one each Panther and Cougar.

The Argentine Panthers served their entire career in standard UNS camouflage of "Gris Nevado" (FS36440) over "Balnco Nube" (FS37875). The Argentine flag insignia was carried on the forward fuselage and a large black "NAVAL" on the rear fuselage. Black serials (e.g. 2-A-20) were painted on the tail and the individual number (e.g. 20) on the nose. Black anchor insignia were on top and bottom of both the port and starboard wings. The Cougars were painted "Azul Oscuro" (FS15042) over "Insignia White" (FS17875). The Argentine flag insignia was carried on the forward fuselage and a large white NAVAL on the rear fuselage. White serials (e.g. 3-A-152) were painted on the tail and the individual number (e.g. 152) on the nose. White anchor insignia were on top and bottom of both the port and starboard wings. Both aircraft would make a colorful model.

As usual with all of Jorge's publications the quality of the reproduction of the photos is excellent and the color profiles are outstanding, all being printed on the highest quality glossy paper. Highly recommended.

This book is available from the SAFCH Sales Service for $20.00.



FMA IA-58 Pucará, by Juan C. Cicalesi & Santiago Rivas. Serie Fuerza Aérea #18. 60 A-4 pages in landscape format. (2010) ISBN 978-987-1682-04-1. Published by Jorge F. Núñez Padín, E-mail: jfnpadin@yahoo.com.

The IA-58 Pucará is a very attractive, twin-turboprop attack aircraft designed and built in Argentina by the FMA (Fábrica Militar de Aviones). The fact that some 600 were in service with Fuerza Aèrea and that it is well known for its participation in the Malvinas/Falklands conflict alone would make it of great interest to the small-air-force enthusiast. However, the Pucará has the added attraction of also being used by the air forces of Uruguay, Colombia, and Sri Lanka. Furthermore, the modeler of aircraft of the smaller countries will be intrigued by a Pucará in the markings of the Mauritanian air force.

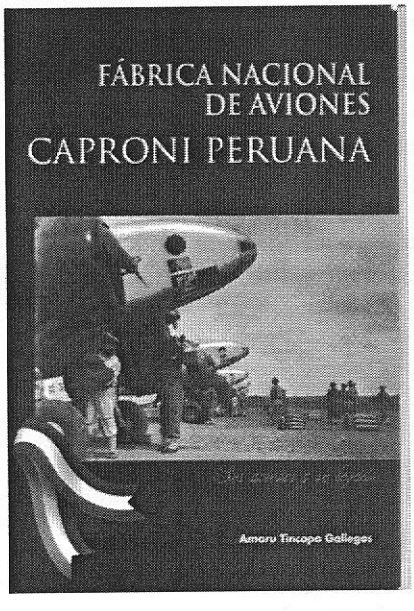
This volume continues the excellent qualities of previous volumes with lots of well-reproduced photos and colorful profile drawings, all on the highest-quality glossy paper. It differs from previous volumes in the series by have 24 more pages (60 vs. 36) and a chapter on the use by counties other than Argentina.

The text is entirely in Spanish, as the chapter titles illustrate: "Historia" (8 pages), "Malvinas (9 pages), "Technica" (7), "Historias Individuales" (10 pages), and "Exportaciones" (3 pages).

However, the main attractions of the book are the photos and color illustrations. There124 photos including 33 in color. Beside Argentine these photos include Pucarás in the markings of Uruguay (6), Colombia (2), and Sri Lanka (2). The color profile drawings consist of Pucarás in the markings of Argentina (18), Mauritania (1), Uruguay (1), Columbia (1), and Sri Lanka (1). In addition, there is a color 3-view drawing and a color 2-view drawing of Argentine Pucarás.

This book is highly recommended, and is available from the SAFCH Sales Service for $25.00.

[Ed: Look for an English-language translation of the chapter on export Pucarás in a future issue of SAFO.]



Fabrica Nacional de Aviones Caproni Peruana: Sus aviones y su legado, by Amaru Tincopa Gallegos, Calle Colmenares D-34, La Molina, Lima-12, Peru. E-mail: el_amaru@yahoo.com. EDISA, November 2010, soft-bound, 100 pages. ISBN 978-612-00-0408-1.

I can well recall the very first time I noted, in the pages of William Green's classic 1958 book "The Air Forces of the World," the nearly stunning information that the Italians had created a factory in Peru in the late 1930s to manufacture Caproni aircraft for the Cuerpo de Aviacion del Peru (CAP). He included just enough information - probably all that was available at the time - to whet the appetite for more on these fascinating aircraft. Fast forward more than 50 years. Here, now, at very long last, comes the answers and details that have, for so long, eluded those interested in these obscure topics.

The author has amassed not fewer than 133 black-and-white photos and seven drawings (the latter apparently extracted from Caproni technical manuals) detailing the entire epic of the following designs, as they were assembled and entered into service with the CAP: Caproni Ca.100, Caproni Peruana Ca.100PR, Caproni Ca.111, Caproni Ca.113, Caproni Ca.114, Caproni Bergamaschi Ba.135, and Caproni Bergamaschi Ca.310. Every page is a treat, and it is impossible to suggest any single image or factoid as my favorite, but the reproduction quality is,

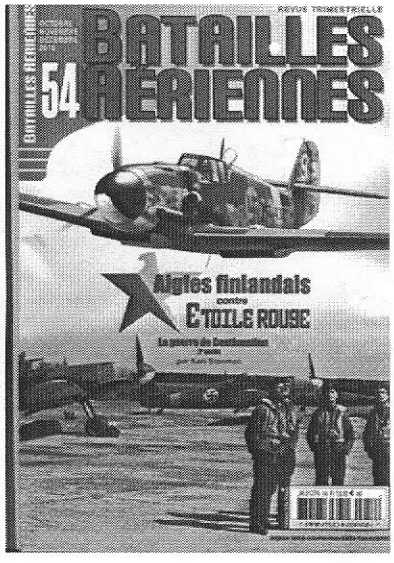
in every instance, excellent, and there is something for everyone.

The only suggestion I could possibly make would have been to wish for color side-view drawings of the principle aircraft, but the production costs for this were probably too daunting. Although the text is in Spanish, his excellent photo captions are in both Spanish and English, and even the untutored should be able to make good use of both throughout, as his narrative is exceptionally well crafted and detailed. This is his first published work, but it is superb, and is a most welcome addition to the literature on Latin American military aviation. Anyone interested in acquiring a copy should contact the author at the e-mail address or mailing address noted above.

This publication is very highly recommended without reservation, and it is my sincere hope that SAFO readers, in particular, will support this wonderful work.

Dan Hagedorn (SAFCH #394), USA.

[Ed: The author sent the following e-mail to Dan Hagedorn: "I forgot to put the cost of my book in my previous e-mail. This book can be purchased directly from me at a cost of $25 dollars (plus $20 for S&H). You have the book, so you know that it is very heavy weight, that's why the shipping is so expensive (and I am still losing about 2-3 dollars on each sale."]



Aigles Finlandais contre Etoile Rouse: Le guerre de Continuation, 2e partie, by Kari Stenman. Batailles Aériennes #54. Editions Lela Presse, 29 rue Paul Bert, 62 230 Outreau, France. Website: www.avions-bateaux.com. E-Mail: contact@avions-bateaux.com.

Kari Stenman's coverage of the Finnish side of the Continuation War (1941-1944) began in Batailles Aériennes #52 which was reviewed in SAFO #134. Now, Kari picks up the story in 1943 with the usual Batailles Aériennes excellently chosen and reproduced photos and colorful profile drawings. The text is in French, but for the reader with a smattering of French (or any other Romance language) and reasonable knowledge of places and events in associated with the Finnish/Soviet conflicts, the text should not be insurmountable. Test yourself with these chapters headings: (1) Modernisation de l'aviation finlandaise, (2) Guerre aérienne sur Carélie, (3) Olonets, (4) Le golfe de Finlande, (5) L'attaque des bases aériennes, (6) Kotka sous le feu ennemi, (7) La grande offensive, (8) La victoire par la défensive, (9) La guerre de Laponie.

However, it's the photos and color profiles that make any Batailles Aériennes issue worth well.

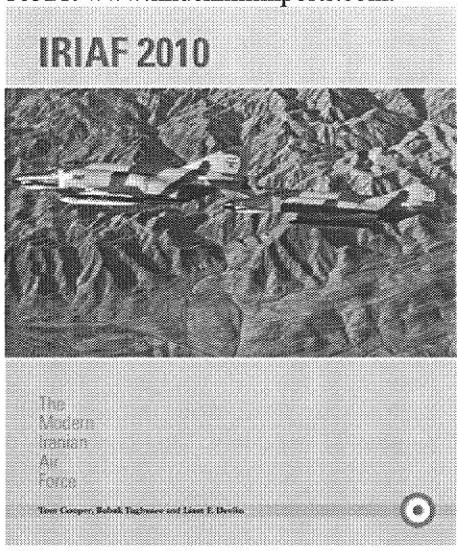
This issue consists of 114 A-4 pages with 187 photos, two 2-view color drawings (Brewster 239), and 33 color profile drawings [Messerschmitt Bf 109 (6), Brewster 239 (4), Morane-Saulnier MS 406 (4), D-21 (4), Junkers Ju 88 (2), Curtiss H-75 (2), Bristol Blenheim (2), Dornier Do 22 (2), Fiat G.50 (2), Blackburn Ripon (1), Hover MF-11 (1), Dornier Do 22 (1), Heinkel He 59 (1), & Westland Lysander (1)].

If you have a shelf full of books on the Finnish Air Force, Batailles Aériennes #52 and #54 may be superfluous, but beautiful additions to your library. However, if you're new to this small air forces history, these two issues are an excellent introduction to the subject – and they will serve as an inspiration to many interesting and historically important models.

[Editor's note: Kari Stenman is one of Finland's most prestigious aviation historians. He has written numerous well-respected books. Now he informs us of his retirement: "Since I have been on retired for two years from the publisher's job, I have decided to sell off the remaining stocks of my books at 50% discount plus p&p at cost. A description of the books can be found at: www.kolumbus.fi/kari.stenman. Send enquiries to kari.stenman@kolumbus.fi ."]

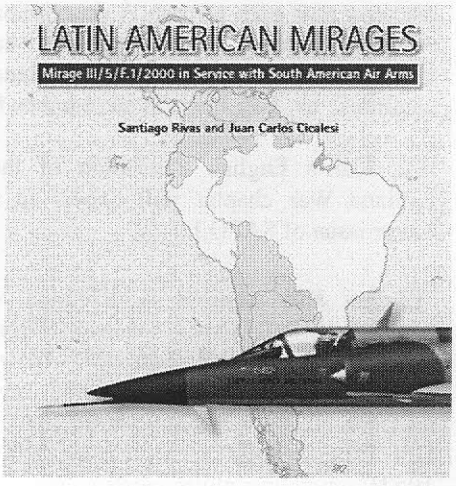
[Ed: Kari's English translation of the Lapland War chapter will appear in a future issue of SAFO.]

"**Linden Hill Imports** is delighted to continue its long association with Harpia Publishing as the publisher's official sales agent in North America. Three new volumes are now available from Linden Hill Ltd., PO Box 534, Crugers, NY 10521. www.lindenhillimports.com."



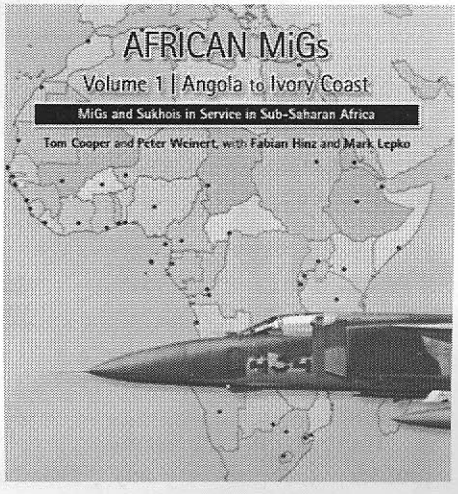
IRIAF 2010 - The Modern Iranian Air Force (HPA 007: $59)

"This richly illustrated book describes the current organisation and equipment of the Islamic Republic of Iran Air Force (IRIAF). Drawing on a wide range of digital photographs, IRIAF 2010 presents all types of combat, transport and training aircraft, as well as helicopters, currently operated by the IRIAF, many of which are supported by captions detailing individual aircraft histories. Following a summary of the air force's development since its early days in the 1920s, the centrepiece of this volume are 12 chapters that cover all major IRIAF bases and flying units stationed there, as well as a summary of the order of battle, in which all units are also represented in the form of patches worn by their pilots. Covering an often under-reported and misinterpreted topic, and one that is directly influential in the current standoff between Iran, the US and Israel, this book is a unique reference source for scholar and enthusiast alike."



Latin American Mirages - Mirage III/5/F.1/2000 in Service with South American Air Arms (HPA 006: $69)

"For more than four decades, different versions of the classic Dassault Mirage fighter have served as some of the most potent combat aircraft in Latin America. Equipping the air forces of seven South American nations in significant quantities, the delta-winged jets have seen action in various different wars and internal conflicts, and they continue to fulfil their mission with a number of operators. This book tells the story of all the members of the Mirage family in service with Latin American air arms, with individual histories of the air arms and their constituent units that have operated the Dassault-designed fighter, as well as its Israeli and South African derivatives. The volume provides a comprehensive collection of colour photographs and profile artworks that cover all the variants, plus maps, and tables that illustrate the individual stories of all the aircraft, their units and their various weapons."

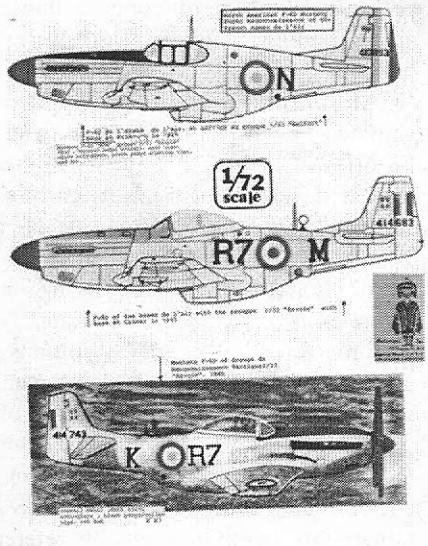


African MiGs Volume 1 - Angola to Ivory Coast (HPA 005: $69)

"This second, expanded and fully revised edition of the groundbreaking book African MiGs examines the role and deployment history of MiG- and Sukhoi-designed fighters — as well as their Chinese derivatives — in no fewer than 23 air forces in Sub-Saharan Africa. This first volume, covering 12 air arms from Angola to Ivory Coast, will be followed by a second volume in 2011. In order to ensure precise documentation of every airframe delivered to and operated by the various air forces, special attention is given to illustrations as well as extensive tables of known serial numbers and attrition. The new volume is updated with much exclusive information, photographs and artworks. As such, it provides the most comprehensive and reliable source on the background of each of the features air forces, their organisation and unit designations, deliveries of fighters built by MiG, Sukhoi, Chengdu and Shenyang, camouflage, markings and combat deployment."

Antarqui Decals

Anarqui Decals (formerly 'All Scale Decals') has come out with three new decal sheet. The decals are excellent with all items printed on the background color of the aircraft so there is no need for intricate cutting. However, this does require careful matching of the colors. These decals are available from the SAFCH Sales Service.



North American F-6C/D Mustang. French Armèe de l'Air. 1/72 scale decals. $8.00 in US. Others add $2.00.

This set contains decals for three Armee d'Air photo reconnaissance Mustangs: razorback F-6C 'N' of Groupe 1/33 "Belfort" in 1949, and two bubble canopy F-6Ds 'R7oM' and 'R7oK' of Groupe 2/33 "Savoie" in 1945. All aircraft are natural metal with red spinners.

The 3 decals sheets (one for each a/c) measure 80 mm by 35 mm, 88 mm by 25 mm, and 70 mm by 36 mm respectively. Provided for each aircraft are 6 roundels, fin flashes with s/ns, codes, and unit crests and emblems. Also provided are 5 camera ports (in black) in 2 sizes.



Beachcraft T-34A Metor, Fuerza Aerea Boliviana. 1/72-scale decals. $4.00 in US. Others add $1.00.

This set provides two roundels, fin flashes, 2 large 'FAB' inscriptions for the upper starboard and the lower port wings, serials for two Bolivian T-34A Mentors

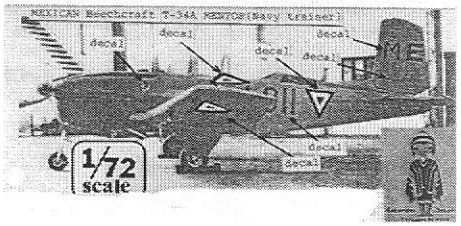
(FAB-905 and FAB 907). The aircraft are overall natural metal with black antiglare panel and dayglo red cowling, wing tips, and horizontal tail.

The decals measure 52 mm by 50 mm.

Beachcraft T-34A Mentor, Mexican Navy. 1/72-scale decals. $3.00 in US. $4.00 elsewhere.

These Mexican Navy Mentors were overall yellow with silver spinner, black propeller blades with yellow tips, and black antiglare panels in front and behind the canopy. The Mexican insignia was carried in the usual six positions.

The decals measure 30 mm square and contain 6 insignia, 'ME' serials, '011' codes, as well as the tiny but still readable (Get out your magnifying glass) "Armanda de Mexico" and a minute unit emblem.



Bright Spark Decals

[Ed: These decals were reviewed in SAFO #132 (April 2010). However, since then detailed instructions sheets have become available. Transcribed below are the main sections of each instruction sheet. In addition, these instructions include the size of roundel and fin flash for each aircraft type. The Pakistani sheet lists 53 aircraft types and the Indian sheet lists 68 types. The roundels are identifies on the decal sheet by their diameter in inches. While the sheets are designed for use on 1/72-scale models, the roundels may also be used for other scales, i.e. 36 inch in 1/72 is 24 inch in 1/48 scale. These decals are available from the SAFCH Sales Service for $7.00 each including postage within the US; all others add 20%. They are also available directly from Bright Spark Decals, M.A. Burton, 2 Gloucester Road, Waterlooville, PO7 7BJ, UK.

Indian Post-1948 Roundels

This sheet was produced to meet the need for modern Indian roundels in the saffron/white/ green colours used since 1948. The British influence on the IAF shows when the roundel and fin flash sizes are collated as the vast majority of British types use the same sizes as the RAF, with the same standard sizes being used on other machines. The table lists the major types, but it must be borne in mind that there are variations. The green on fin flash is always to the front of the aircraft.

Indian Air Force serials, along with early Navy serials, also seem to follow RAF influence, and these are available on Modeldecal 33 to 36A, 48A, 58 to 61.

Pakistani AF and Navy Roundels

This sheet provides roundels and fin flashes for Pakistani aircraft from the nation's inception in 1948 to date. Also supplied are a variety of larger white centres for application over the appropriate roundel to form one of the differing styles that have been used, along with extra white bars for the more modem type of fin flash. If using the larger centres or bars they should be applied once the basic decal is in position and fully dry. The white bars should be positioned to the font of the normal flash to mimic the Pakistani national flag, and it should be noted that some of the second-line aircraft carry a rectangular fin flash. This can be replicated by carefully trimming a suitable amount from the top and bottom of the basic flash.

Although it would appear that only single-handed flashes are supplied on this sheet careful study of references show that both sides of the fins carry identical flashes, so that the decal need only to be rotated 180 degrees to provide the opposite-handed orientation, with the star always uppermost and to the rear. Roundels with the thin yellow surround were commonly used on camouflaged aircraft in the early years, such as Fury, C-47 and Tempest. Some Freighters carried a roundel with a smaller white centre, this can be made by using the normal sized roundel and then applying a suitable smaller one over it once dry.

Pakistan's Army aircraft use an identical roundel, as did early Navy machines. The later Navy markings are entwined with an anchor and recent air force aircraft and the Navy's P-3's wear reduced visibility grey markings, neither of which is available on this sheet.

Earlier Pakistani Air Force serials seem to fellow RAF influence, and these are available on Modeldecal 33 to 36A, 48A, 58 to 61, and the later ones are more a akin to the American styles.

Royal Saudi AF Roundels

This sheet provides one of the early styles of roundels used applied to the aircraft belonging to the Royal Saudi Air Force, fin flashes, and RSAF titling, along with a selection of numbers in both Arabic and Latin in green, and are designed for models in 1/72nd scale. The majority of the sheet is taken up with the latter items as roundels are available from other sources.

RSAF roundels have either evolved (or have been incorrectly painted!) with numerous subtle differences over the years and research has showed that supplying all of the styles used in all of the sizes would be considerable undertaking. Therefore this generic style has been produced and are usable on the majority of the aircraft flown by the RSAF in its early years, such as C-123 Provider, Chipmunk, T-6G Texan, C-130 Hercules, A-26B Invader, Lightning, Hunter, Reims Skyhawk, F-5 Tiger, T-33A, F-86F Sabre, T-35 Buckaroo, T-28A Trojan, Vampire, Jetstar, C-47 Dakota, Strikemaster, UH-l Iroquois, Bell Jetranger and Jetstream.

The green numbers were used on some of the earlier machines as well, chiefly the C-130 Hercules, hence a selection of numbers from zero to nine has been provided in three sizes for the Latin numbers and two for the Arabic. Serials in green are also applied to VIP-schemed aircraft such as HS.125, Bell 212 and CN-235.

The green "RSAF" and "Royal Saudi Air- Force" titling has a much wider scope as this is used on the more modem aircraft as well, such as E-3 Sentry, KE-3, F-15 Eagle, Tornado and Hawk.

Please bear in mind that this sheet has not been designed as a "one-stop" RSAF markings decal sheet like previous BSD releases, but as an ancillary aid to the modeller in filling a gap in the availability of Saudi markings.

"Things have been hectic, but finally I've had a chance to sit down and have a thorough read of .#134.

"My sincere appreciation, once again, to Leif Hellstrom for the splendid Part 2 of his excellent account of the use of T-6 series aircraft in the Congo. There are very few historians with his skill at ferreting out the details of obscure aircraft such as this, but even more importantly, making sense of conflicting data.

"It was also good to see Piper aircraft get a bow from Captain Jorge Delgado P. in Servicio Aereo del Ejercito Ecuatoriano service. The PA-24's have been very poor understood, and I was pleased to learn at last that there were indeed five of them. As a bit of a footnote, I saw and photographed two PA-24s, which I assumed were FAE aircraft, in rather poor condition in an Ecuadorian Navy compound at Guayaquil on 6 May 1969. They were marked as 24-2229 and 24-2245, which of course was in keeping with FAE policy of the time in that the serial numbers were either (a) the previous military serial number of the last operator (if USAF or US Navy) or the Manufacturers Serial Number. They did not seem to bear any traces of Army service, but I'd be willing to bet that these were survivors of the Army five. I am enclosing a scan of 24-2229. Note that the color scheme is very different than that which Jorge accompanied his article with showing Army 101.

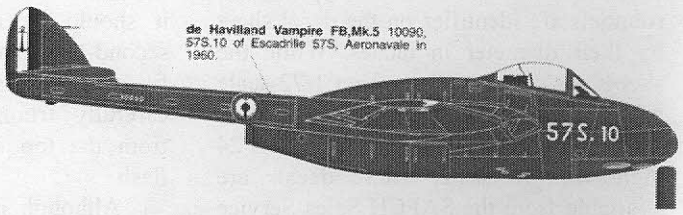


"I was surprised to see Jorge's note in the article, however, which suggested that the Army also had two Piper 'Cubs' as s/n 10 and 15. I think he was actually referring to two (of the at least three) Piper PA-18 Super Cubs that the Army operated. There is a significant difference between J3C and L-4 series Cubs and PA-18 series Super Cubs. I'd like to see more on those, and I believe that Jorge had submitted a drawing of Ejercito E-250 in SAFO No.110 on page 61."
Dan Hagedorn (SAFCH #394), USA.

[Ed: In SAFO #123, Jorge Delgado told the story of North American O-47A s/n 37-287 1941 crash in Ecuador. At that time, there was no information in the USAAF files about this aircraft. Now, Dan Hagedorn has turned up a few references that add to the story.]

"I recently acquired an unusual USAAF data base of accidents and found an entry for North American O-47A 37-287 which revealed the following additional information: the location of the accident was given as Machellila, Ecuador, and the aircraft was home-based at France Field, Canal Zone."

"I just discovered yet another O-47 in Ecuador that I had not been aware of previously. O-47B 39-93 suffered an accident at Guayaquil on 16 December 1942 while under the command of Charles L. Nothstein, and was home-based at APO 661 (Salinas, Ecuador). Unfortunately, I have no other details at the moment."

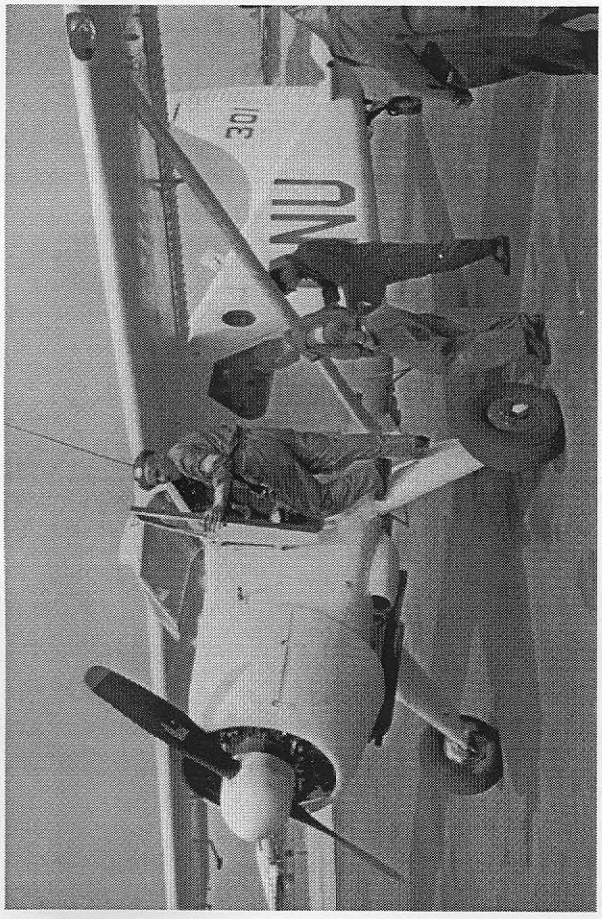


"Regarding the Antarqui decals for the SNCASE Mistral reviewed in SAFO #135: The aircraft shown in overall Sea Blue and coded 57 S-10 was not a Mistral! This unit never used the Mistral. However, they did fly de Havilland Vampires in 1954-55 from the *Aéronavale* base at Lartigue, French Algeria. So, the decals are not wasted. Enclosed is picture of a French Aéronavale Vampire from Warpaint Series #27, *de Havilland Vampire*, by W.A. Harrison.

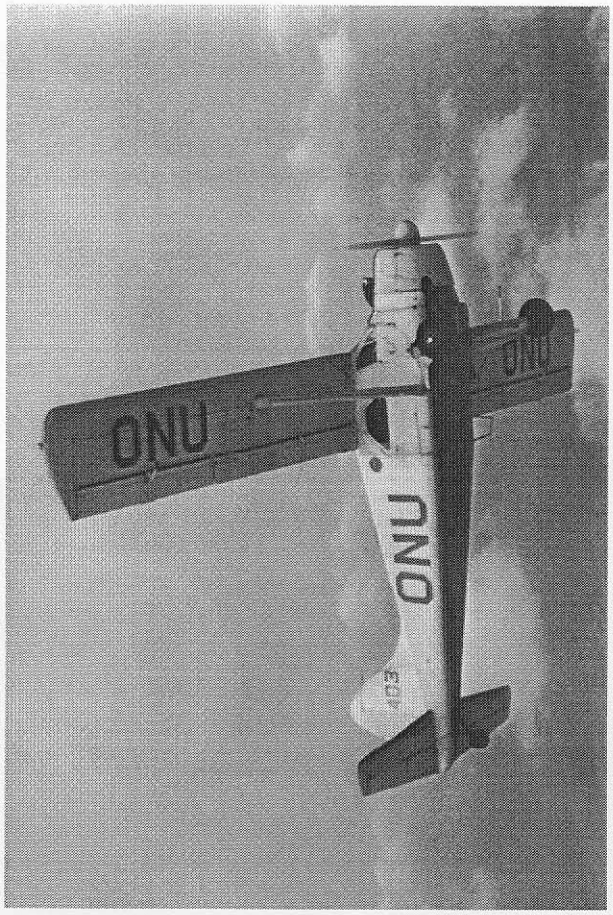
"Strangely enough, when Heller released the kit of the Mistral at the beginning of the 1980s they made the same mistake by including Aéronavale decals for a Mistral. Shame on them."
Christian Hotte (SAFCH #902), France.

"The AAHS (American Aviation Historical Society) Journal usually doesn't have much related to Small Air Forces, however in this month's issue has the following: Gerard Casius, 'The P-51D/K Mustangs of the Royal Netherlands East Indies Air Force,' AAHS Journal, Vol 55:4 (Winter 2010): 298-305, profiles, photographs and serial listing.

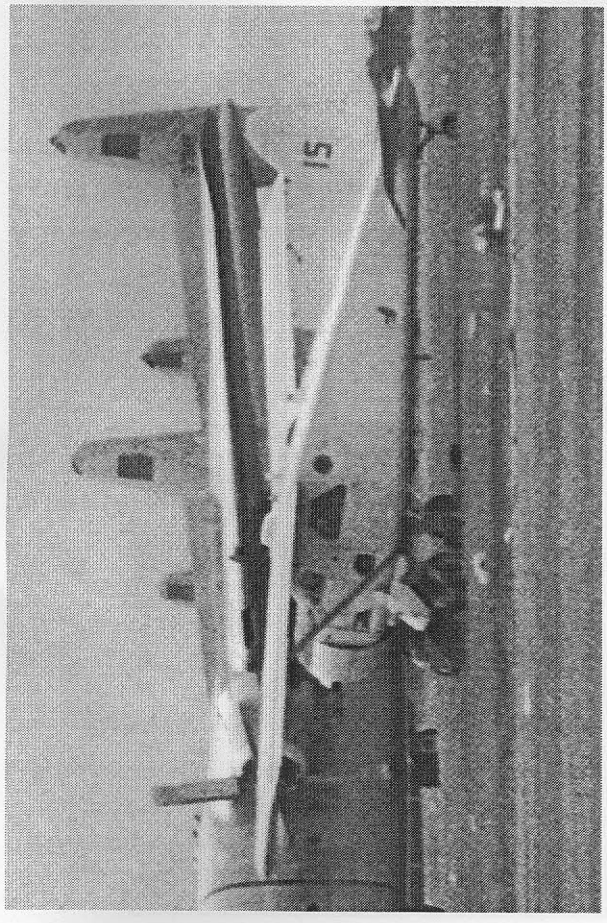
"Also interesting is, John Cilio, 'Defending Neutrality, the Swiss Air Force in World War II,' Warbirds (Feb 2011):36-39. Article with photographs, but no foot notes. Warbirds is a publication of the Experimental Aircraft Association."
Alan Hawk (SAFCH #721), USA.



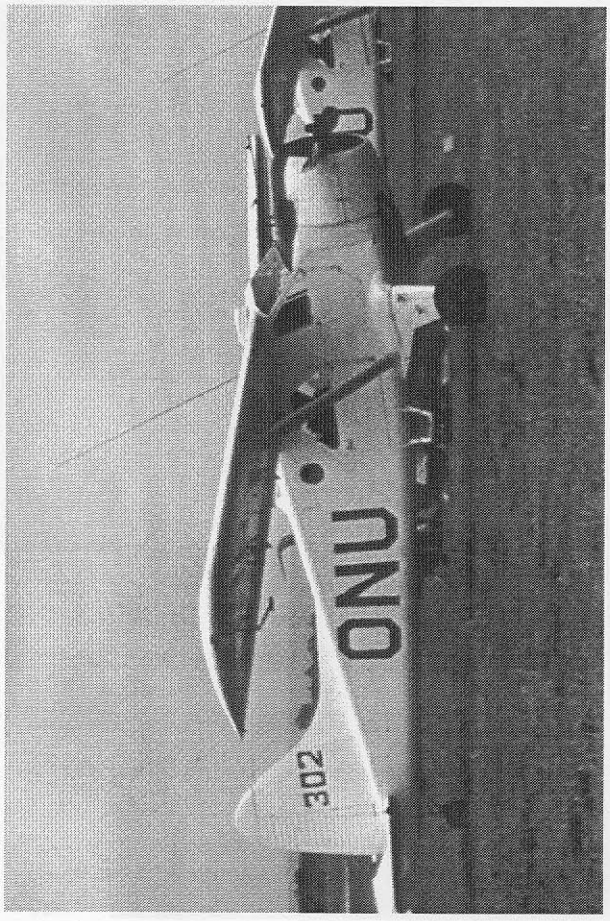
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